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**THE COMPLETE POEMS OF
CHARLOTTE BRONTË**



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1936 J

The Complete Poems of
CHARLOTTE BRONTË
Edited by CLEMENT SHORTER
Now for the first time collected,
with Bibliography and Notes, by
C. W. HATFIELD *• • •*

Hodder and Stoughton
Limited *London*

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PREFACE

POEMS by Charlotte Brontë have appeared in numerous books and periodicals since the year 1846, when the first book containing poems by the Brontë sisters was published (*Poems by Currer, Ellis, and Acton Bell*), but only once has a separate volume of her poems been published. That was more than forty years ago, and the volume was not issued in Great Britain, but in the United States of America :

Poems by Charlotte Brontë (CURRER BELL)

New York : White and Stokes, 1882.

This was a small book of 135 pages, and contained only poems which had been previously published.

The present volume is, therefore, the first separate collection of the poems of Charlotte Brontë which has been published in her native country ; and it contains not only every poem by her which has been published, but all her poems which have been printed for private circulation only, and a large number of poems which have not been previously printed. Of the ninety-eight poems by Charlotte Brontë

POEMS BY C. BRONTË

which this book contains, forty-nine are now published for the first time.

Most of the poems belonging to the Angrian or Zamorna cycle are included in the unpublished stories which were written by Charlotte Brontë before the year 1839, and have been obtained from a large collection of these stories sent to me by Mr. Clement Shorter, the owner of the copyright of all the Brontë writings still protected by law; and at whose welcome suggestion this book has been prepared.

For much valuable information—including notes and dates to poems published by Charlotte Brontë, many emendations in the text of printed poems, several additional stanzas, and a number of poems not previously printed—I am indebted to Mr. Henry H. Bonnell, of Philadelphia, U.S.A., whose unique collection of Brontëana contains most of the original manuscripts of the poems written by Charlotte Brontë.

I am also indebted to Mr. Thomas J. Wise for the loan of several pamphlets containing poems by Charlotte Brontë which were printed for private circulation only.

C. W. HATFIELD.

1923.

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A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE COMPLETE POEMS OF CHARLOTTE BRONTË (CURRER BELL)

Born at Thornton, near Bradford, Yorkshire, April 21, 1816.

Died at Haworth Parsonage, Yorkshire, March 31, 1855.

NOTE.—*The books, pamphlets, periodicals, etc., named in the following list are those in which the poems indicated were first printed.*

(a)

Poems by Currer, Ellis, and Acton Bell.

London: Aylott and Jones, 8, Paternoster-
Row. 1846.

Poems by Currer Bell:

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PILATE'S WIFE'S DREAM. I've quenched my lamp, I struck it in that start (pp. 1-7)	1
MEMENTOS. Arranging long-locked drawers and shelves (pp. 11-21)	6
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THE WOOD. But two miles more, and then we rest (pp. 35-40) .	16
FRANCES. She will not sleep, for fear of dreams (pp. 46-56) .	20
GILBERT. 1. THE GARDEN. Above the city hung the moon (pp. 60-65)	28
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THE MISSIONARY. Plough, vessel, plough the British main (pp. 157-163)	63

(b)

Jane Eyre. An Autobiography.

Edited by Currer Bell. In three volumes.

London: Smith, Elder, and Co., Cornhill.

1847.

My feet they are sore, and my limbs they are weary (vol. i. pp. 30-31)	67
The truest love that ever heart (vol. ii. pp. 246-248)	68

(c)

The Manchester Athenæum Album. 1850.

Poem by Currer Bell:

THE ORPHANS. 'Twas New Year's night; the joyous throng (pp. 9-12)	70
---	----

(d)

The Life of Charlotte Brontë. By E. C. GASKELL.

London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 65, Cornhill.

1857.

Poem by Charlotte Brontë:

THE WOUNDED STAG. Passing amid the deepest shade (vol. i. pp. 97-98)	194
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(e)

The Professor, A Tale. By CURRER BELL. In two volumes

London: Smith, Elder & Co., 65, Cornhill.

1857.

I gave, at first, attention close (vol. ii. pp. 151-161)	211
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(f)

The Cornhill Magazine. Vol. II. December, 1860.

Poem by Charlotte Brontë:

WATCHING AND WISHING. Oh, would I were the golden light
(p. 741) 201

(g)

The Cornhill Magazine. Vol. IV. August, 1861.

Poem by Charlotte Brontë:

WHEN THOU SLEEPEST. When thou sleepest, lulled in night
(pp. 178-179) 216

(h)

Scribner's Monthly. Vol. II. May, 1871.

Reminiscences of Charlotte Brontë, by 'A School-fellow' (pp. 18-31).

Poem by Charlotte Brontë:

MEMORY. When the dead in their cold graves are lying . . . 146

(i)

The British Weekly. February, 1895.

Unpublished Story by Charlotte Brontë.

This article is a description of a manuscript which is in the British Museum, and includes the following poem by Charlotte Brontë:

The wave of Death's river 179

A more correct and complete copy of this poem was printed in the Brontë Society Publications, April 1916, Part XXVI., p. 143.

(j)

The Adventures of Ernest Alembert. A Fairy Tale.

By CHARLOTTE BRONTË.

Edited by Thomas J. Wise. 1896.

Edition limited to Thirty Copies for private circulation only.

Proudly the sun has sunk to rest (pp. 32-33) 87

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(k)

The Woman at Home. December 1896.

Poems by Charlotte Brontë (pp. 287-289):

ON THE DEATH OF EMILY BRONTË. My darling, thou wilt never know	209
ON THE DEATH OF ANNE BRONTË. There's little joy in life for me	210

(l)

Poet-Lore. Vol. IX. Spring Number, 1897.

Early Romances of Charlotte Brontë: I. A Leaf
from an Unopened Volume, or The Manuscript
of an Unfortunate Author (pp. 169-181).

Poem by Charlotte Brontë:

TWILIGHT SONG. The moon dawned slow in the dusky gloaming (p. 178)	155
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(m)

Poet-Lore. Vol. IX. Autumn Number, 1897.

Early Romances of Charlotte Brontë: II. The
Green Dwarf (pp. 479-497).

Poem by Charlotte Brontë:

The night fell down all calm and still	142
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Eleven lines omitted. The complete poem was
first printed in (y).

(n)

Poems by Charlotte, Emily, and Anne Brontë.

New York: Dodd, Mead and Company. 1902.

Edition limited to 110 copies printed for
private circulation only.

Poems by Charlotte Brontë:

SUNSET. Beneath a shady tree I sat (pp. 3-4)	74
SUNRISE. Behold that silvery streak of light (pp. 5-6)	75
WRITTEN UPON THE OCCASION OF A DINNER TO THE LITERATI OF GLASS TOWN. The splendid hall is blazing (pp. 7-10)	77

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O there is a land the sun loves to lighten (pp. 15-17)	126
Fair forms of glistening marble stand around (pp. 18-19)	135
A NATIONAL ODE FOR THE ANGRIANS. The sun is on the Calabar, the dawn is quenched in day (pp. 20-24)	174
Gods of the old mythology arise in gloom and storm (pp. 28-29)	218

This volume contains also as the work of Charlotte
Brontë part of a poem not previously printed ;
see Appendix, pp. 235-237, lines 152-205.

(o)

The Times Literary Supplement. January 4, 1907.
Poem by Charlotte Brontë :

LINES ON THE CELEBRATED BEWICK. The cloud of recent death is past away	131
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(p)

The Brontës: Life and Letters. By CLEMENT
SHORTER.

London : Hodder and Stoughton. 1908.

Poem by Charlotte Brontë :

A Roland for your Oliver (Vol. I., pp. 204-205)	206
---	-----

This poem is stated to have been previously
printed in *The Whitehaven News*.

(q)

Richard Cœur de Lion and Blondel. A Poem By
CHARLOTTE BRONTË.

London : Printed for Thomas J. Wise, Hamp-
stead, N.W. 1912.

Edition limited to Thirty Copies for private
circulation only.

RICHARD CŒUR DE LION AND BLONDEL. The blush, the light, the gorgeous glow of Eve (pp. 9-19)	148
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(r)

Saul And Other Poems. By CHARLOTTE BRONTË.

London: Printed for Thomas J. Wise, Hampstead, N.W. 1913.

Edition limited to Thirty Copies for private circulation only.

SAUL. 'Neath the palms in Eluh's valley (pp. 7-11) . . .	180
We wove a web in childhood (p. 15)	193
REASON. Unloved I love, unwept I weep (pp. 16-18) . . .	219

(s)

Brontë Poems. Edited by Arthur C. Benson.

London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 15 Waterloo Place. 1915

Poems by Charlotte Brontë:

THE CHURCHYARD. One night, when silence reigned around (p. 3) .	76
Look into thought and say what dost thou see (p. 15) . . .	199
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EVENTIDE. The house was still, the room was still (p. 58) . .	222
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Speak of the North! A lonely moor (p. 61)	224

(Stanzas 6-8 of poem xcv., p. 224.)

(t)

The Violet. A poem by CHARLOTTE BRONTË.

Privately printed by Clement Shorter. 1916.

Edition limited to Twenty-five Copies.

THE VIOLET. One eve as all the radiant west (pp. 5-15) . . .	106
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(u)

The Cornhill Magazine. No. 680. August 1916.

Poem by Charlotte Brontë:

LAMENT BEFITTING THESE 'TIMES OF NIGHT.' Lament for the Martyr who dies for his faith (pp. 147-148)	191
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(v)

The Red Cross Knight and Other Poems. By
CHARLOTTE BRONTË.

London : Printed for Thomas J. Wise, Hamp-
stead, N.W. 1917.

Edition limited to Thirty Copies for private
circulation only.

THE RED CROSS KNIGHT. To the desert sands of Palestine (pp. 5-7)	145
SONG. He is gone, and all grandeur has fled from the mountain (pp. 8-9)	122
MATIN. Long hath earth lain beneath the dark profound (pp. 10-14)	115
MORNING. Lo ! the light of the morning is glowing (pp. 15-17). .	99

The copy of this poem printed on pp. 99-101 is
from a different and apparently later manu-
script.

(w)

The Swiss Emigrant's Return and Other Poems.
By CHARLOTTE BRONTË.

London : Privately printed for Thomas J.
Wise, Hampstead, N.W. 1917.

Edition limited to Thirty Copies for private
circulation only.

THE SWISS EMIGRANT'S RETURN. Long I have sighed for my home in the mountain (pp. 5-7)	137
A SERENADE. Gently the moonbeams are kissing the deep (pp. 14-15)	138
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(x)

The Orphans and other Poems.

London : Printed for Thomas J. Wise, Hamp-
stead, N.W. 1917.

Edition limited to Thirty Copies for private
circulation only.

Poem by Charlotte Brontë :

A SERENADE. Awake ! Awake ! fair sleeper. Awake and view the night (pp. 9-11)	118
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(y)

Latest Gleanings. A Series of Unpublished Poems
by CHARLOTTE BRONTË.

London: Privately printed by Clement
Shorter. 1918.

Edition limited to Twenty-five Copies.

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(z)

The Four Wishes. A Fairy Tale. By CHARLOTTE
BRONTË.

London: Privately printed by Clement
Shorter. April, 1918.

Edition limited to Twenty Copies.

Includes poem:

Hearken, O mortal! to the wail (p. 13)	120
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(za)

Darius Codomannus. A Poem by CHARLOTTE
BRONTË.

London: Printed for Thomas J. Wise, Hamp-
stead, N.W. 1920.

Edition limited to Thirty Copies for private
circulation only.

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(2b)

The Complete Poems of Charlotte Brontë. Edited
by CLEMENT SHORTER.

London: Hodder and Stoughton Limited.
1923.

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YOUNG MAN NAUGHTY'S ADVENTURE. Murk was the night: nor star nor moon	103
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POEMS PUBLISHED BY
CHARLOTTE BRONTË

I

PILATE'S WIFE'S DREAM

I've quenched my lamp, I struck it in that start
Which every limb convulsed, I heard it fall—
The crash blent with my sleep, I saw depart
Its light, even as I woke, on yonder wall :
Over against my bed, there shone a gleam
Strange, faint, and mingling also with my dream.

It sank, and I am wrapt in utter gloom ;
How far is night advanced, and when will day
Re-tinge the dusk and livid air with bloom,
And fill this void with warm, creative ray ?
Would I could sleep again till, clear and red,
Morning shall on the mountain-tops be spread !

I'd call my women, but to break their sleep,
Because my own is broken, were unjust ;
They've wrought all day, and well-earned
slumbers steep
Their labours in forgetfulness, I trust :
Let me my feverish watch with patience bear,
Thankful that none with me its sufferings share.

Yet oh ! for light ! one ray would tranquillize
My nerves, my pulses, more than effort can ;
I'll draw my curtain and consult the skies :
These trembling stars at dead of night look wan,
Wild, restless, strange, yet cannot be more drear
Than this my couch, shared by a nameless fear.

POEMS BY

All black—one great cloud, drawn from east to west,
Conceals the heavens, but there are lights below ;

Torches burn in Jerusalem, and cast
On yonder stony mount a lurid glow.
I see men stationed there, and gleaming spears ;
A sound, too, from afar, invades my ears.

Dull, measured strokes of axe and hammer ring
From street to street, not loud, but through the night
Distinctly heard—and some strange spectral thing
Is now upreared—and, fixed against the light
Of the pale lamps, defined upon that sky,
It stands up like a column, straight and high.

I see it all—I know the dusky sign—
A cross on Calvary, which Jews uprear
While Romans watch ; and when the dawn shall shine

Pilate, to judge the victim, will appear—
Pass sentence—yield Him up to crucify ;
And on that cross the spotless Christ must die.

Dreams, then, are true—for thus my vision ran ;
Surely some oracle has been with me,
The gods have chosen me to reveal their plan,
To warn an unjust judge of destiny :
I, slumbering, heard and saw ; awake I know,
Christ's coming death, and Pilate's life of woe.

I do not weep for Pilate—who could prove
Regret for him whose cold and crushing sway
No prayer can soften, no appeal can move ;
Who tramples hearts as others trample clay,
Yet with a faltering, an uncertain tread,
That might stir up reprisal in the dead.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Forced to sit by his side and see his deeds ;
Forced to behold that visage, hour by hour,
In whose gaunt lines the abhorrent gazer reads
A triple lust of gold, and blood, and power ;
A soul whom motives fierce, yet abject, urge—
Rome's servile slave, and Judah's tyrant scourge ;

How can I love, or mourn, or pity him ?
I, who so long my fettered hands have wrung ;
I, who for grief have wept my eyesight dim ;
Because, while life for me was bright and
young,
He robbed my youth—he quenched my life's fair
ray—
He crushed my mind, and did my freedom slay.

And at this hour—although I be his wife—
He has no more of tenderness from me
Than any other wretch of guilty life ;
Less, for I know his household privacy—
I see him as he is—without a screen ;
And, by the gods, my soul abhors his mien !

Has he not sought my presence, dyed in blood—
Innocent, righteous blood, shed shamelessly ?
And have I not his red salute withstood ?
Ay, when, as erst, he plunged all Galilee
In dark bereavement—in affliction sore,
Mingling their very offerings with their gore.

Then came he—in his eyes a serpent-smile,
Upon his lips some false, endearing word,
And through the streets of Salem clanged the
while
His slaughtering, hacking, sacrilegious sword—
And I, to see a man cause men such woe,
Trembled with ire I did not fear to show.

POEMS BY

And now the envious Jewish priests have brought
Jesus—whom they in mockery call their king—
To have, by this grim power, their vengeance
wrought :

By this mean reptile, innocence to sting.
Oh ! could I but the purposed doom avert,
And shield the blameless head from cruel hurt !

Accessible is Pilate's heart to fear,
Omens will shake his soul, like autumn leaf ;
Could he this night's appalling vision hear,
This just man's bonds were loosed, his life were
safe,
Unless that bitter priesthood should prevail,
And make even terror to their malice quail.

Yet if I tell the dream—but let me pause.
What dream ? Erewhile the characters were
clear,
Graved on my brain—at once some unknown cause
Has dimmed and razed the thoughts, which
now appear,
Like a vague remnant of some by-past scene ;—
Not what will be, but what, long since, has been.

I suffered many things—I heard foretold
A dreadful doom for Pilate,—lingering woes,
In far barbarian climes, where mountains cold
Built up a solitude of trackless snows :
There he and grisly wolves prowled side by side,
There he lived famished—there, methought, he
died ;

But not of hunger, nor by malady ;
I saw the snow around him, stained with gore ;
I said I had no tears for such as he,
And lo ! my cheek is wet—mine eyes run o'er.
I weep for mortal suffering, mortal guilt,
I weep the impious deed, the blood self-spilt.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

More I recall not, yet the vision spread
 Into a world remote, an age to come—
 And still the illumined name of Jesus shed
 A light, a clearness through the unfolding
 gloom—
 And still I saw that sign which now I see,
 That cross on yonder brow of Calvary.

What is this Hebrew Christ ?—to me unknown
His lineage—doctrine—mission ; yet how clear
Is god-like goodness in his actions shown,
How straight and stainless is his life's career !
The ray of Deity that rests on him,
In my eyes makes Olympian glory dim.

The world advances ; Greek or Roman rite
Suffices not the inquiring mind to stay ;
The searching soul demands a purer light
To guide it on its upward, onward way ;
Ashamed of sculptured gods, Religion turns
To where the unseen Jehovah's altar burns.

Our faith is rotten, all our rites defiled,
Our temples sullied, and, methinks, this Man,
With His new ordinance, so wise and mild,
Is come, even as He says, the chaff to fan
And sever from the wheat ; but will His faith
Survive the terrors of to-morrow's death ?

I feel a firmer trust—a higher hope
 Rise in my soul—it dawns with dawning
 day;
 Lo ! on the Temple's roof—on Moriah's slope
 Appears at length that clear and crimson
 ray
 Which I so wished for when shut in by night ;
 Oh, opening skies, I hail, I bless your light !

POEMS BY

Part, clouds and shadows! Glorious Sun,
appear!

Part, mental gloom! Come, insight from
on high!

Dusk dawn in heaven still strives with daylight
clear,

The longing soul doth still uncertain sigh.
Oh! to behold the truth—that sun divine,
How doth my bosom pant, my spirit pine!

This day, Time travails with a mighty birth;
This day, Truth stoops from heaven and visits
earth;

Ere night descends I shall more surely know
What guide to follow, in what path to go;
I wait in hope—I wait in solemn fear,
The oracle of God—the sole—true God—to
hear.

II

MENTOS

ARRANGING long-locked drawers and shelves
Of cabinets shut up for years,

What a strange task we've set ourselves!

How still the lonely room appears!

How strange this mass of ancient treasures,
Mementos of past pains and pleasures;

These volumes, clasped with costly stone,
With print all faded, gilding gone;

These fans of leaves, from Indian trees—

These crimson shells, from Indian seas—

These tiny portraits, set in rings—

Once, doubtless, deemed such precious things;

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Keepsakes bestowed by Love on Faith,
And worn till the receiver's death,
Now stored with cameos, china, shells,
In this old closet's dusty cells.

I scarcely think, for ten long years,
A hand has touched these relics old ;
And, coating each, slow-formed, appears
The growth of green and antique mould.

All in this house is mossing over ;
All is unused, and dim, and damp ;
Nor light, nor warmth, the rooms discover—
Bereft for years of fire and lamp.

The sun, sometimes in summer, enters
The casements, with reviving ray ;
But the long rains of many winters
Moulder the very walls away.

And outside all is ivy, clinging
To chimney, lattice, gable grey ;
Scarcely one little red rose springing
Through the green moss can force its way.

Unscared, the daw and starling nestle,
Where the tall turret rises high,
And winds alone come near to rustle
The thick leaves where their cradles lie.

I sometimes think, when late at even
I climb the stair reluctantly,
Some shape that should be well in heaven,
Or ill elsewhere, will pass by me.

I fear to see the very faces,
Familiar thirty years ago,
Even in the old accustomed places
Which look so cold and gloomy now.

POEMS BY

I've come, to close the window, hither,
At twilight, when the sun was down,
And Fear my very soul would wither,
Lest something should be dimly shown,

Too much the buried form resembling,
Of her who once was mistress here ;
Lest doubtful shade, or moonbeam trembling
Might take her aspect, once so dear.

Hers was this chamber ; in her time
It seemed to me a pleasant room,
For then no cloud of grief or crime
Had cursed it with a settled gloom ;

I had not seen death's image laid
In shroud and sheet, on yonder bed.
Before she married, she was blest—
Blest in her youth, blest in her worth ;
Her mind was calm, its sunny rest
Shone in her eyes more clear than mirth.

And when attired in rich array,
Light, lustrous hair about her brow,
She yonder sat, a kind of day
Lit up what seems so gloomy now.
These grim oak walls even then were grim ;
That old carved chair was then antique ;
But what around looked dusk and dim
Served as a foil to her fresh cheek ;
Her neck and arms, of hue so fair,
Eyes of unclouded, smiling light ;
Her soft, and curled, and floating hair,
Gems and attire, as rainbow bright.

Reclined in yonder deep recess,
Ofttimes she would, at evening, lie
Watching the sun ; she seemed to bless
With happy glance the glorious sky.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

She loved such scenes, and as she gazed,
Her face evinced her spirit's mood ;
Beauty or grandeur ever raised
In her a deep-felt gratitude.

But of all lovely things, she loved
A cloudless moon on summer night ;
Full oft have I impatience proved
To see how long her still delight
Would find a theme in reverie,
Out on the lawn, or where the trees
Let in the lustre fitfully,
As their boughs parted momentarily
To the soft, languid summer breeze.
Alas ! that she should e'er have flung
Those pure though lonely joys away :
Deceived by false and guileful tongue,
She gave her hand, then suffered wrong ;
Oppressed, ill-used, she faded young,
And died of grief by slow decay.

Open that casket—look how bright
Those jewels flash upon the sight ;
The brilliants have not lost a ray
Of lustre since her wedding-day.
But see—upon that pearly chain—
How dim lies Time's discolouring stain.
I've seen that by her daughter worn :
For, ere she died, a child was born ;—
A child that ne'er its mother knew,
That lone, and almost friendless, grew ;
For, ever, when its step drew nigh,
Averted was the father's eye ;
And then a life impure and wild
Made him a stranger to his child :
Absorbed in vice, he little cared
On what she did, or how she fared.

POEMS BY

The love withheld she never sought,
She grew uncherished—learnt untaught ;
To her the inward life of thought
Full soon was open laid.
I know not if her friendlessness
Did sometimes on her spirit press,
But plaint she never made.

The book-shelves were her darling
treasure,
She rarely seemed the time to measure
While she could read alone.
And she too loved the twilight wood,
And often, in her mother's mood,
Away to yonder hill would hie,
Like her, to watch the setting sun,
Or see the stars born, one by one,
Out of the darkening sky.
Nor would she leave that hill till night
Trembled from pole to pole with light ;
Even then, upon her homeward way,
Long—long her wandering steps delayed
To quit the sombre forest shade,
Through which her eerie pathway lay.

You ask if she had beauty's grace ?
I know not—but a nobler face
My eyes have seldom seen ;
A keen and fine intelligence,
And, better still, the truest sense
Were in her speaking mien.
But bloom or lustre was there none,
Only at moments fitful shone
An ardour in her eye,
That kindled on her cheek a flush,
Warm as a red sky's passing blush
And quick with energy.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Her speech, too, was not common speech,
No wish to shine, or aim to teach,

Was in her words displayed :
She still began with quiet sense,
But oft the force of eloquence

Came to her lips in aid ;
Language and voice unconscious changed,
And thoughts, in other words arranged,

Her fervid soul transfused
Into the hearts of those who heard,
And transient strength and ardour stirred,

In minds to strength unused :
Yet in gay crowd or festal glare,
Grave and retiring was her air ;
'Twas seldom, save with me alone,
That fire of feeling freely shone ;
She loved not awe's nor wonder's gaze,
Nor even exaggerated praise,
Nor even notice, if too keen

The curious gazer searched her mien.
Nature's own green expanse revealed

The world, the pleasures, she could prize ;
On free hill-side, in sunny field,
In quiet spots by woods concealed,

Grew wild and fresh her chosen joys—
Yet Nature's feelings deeply lay

In that endowed and youthful frame ;
Shrined in her heart and hid from day,

They burned unseen with silent flame.
In youth's first search for mental light,

She lived but to reflect and learn,
But soon her mind's maturer might

For stronger task did pant and yearn :
And stronger task did fate assign,

Task that a giant's strength might strain ;
To suffer long and ne'er repine,

Be calm in frenzy, smile at pain.

POEMS BY

Pale with the secret war of feeling,
Sustained with courage, mute yet high,
The wounds at which she bled revealing
Only by altered cheek and eye ;

She bore in silence—but when passion
Surged in her soul with ceaseless foam,
The storm at last brought desolation,
And drove her exiled from her home.

And silent still, she straight assembled
The wrecks of strength her soul retained ;
For thought the wasted body trembled,
The unconquered mind, to quail, disdained.

She crossed the sea—now lone she wanders
By Seine's, or Rhine's, or Arno's flow :
Fain would I know if distance renders
Relief or comfort to her woe.

Fain would I know if, henceforth, ever,
These eyes shall read in hers again,
That light of love which faded never,
Though dimmed so long with secret pain.

She will return, but cold and altered,
Like all whose hopes too soon depart ;
Like all on whom have beat, unsheltered,
The bitter blasts that blight the heart.

No more shall I behold her lying
Calm on a pillow, smoothed by me ;
No more that spirit, worn with sighing,
Will know the rest of infancy.

If still the paths of lore she follow,
'Twill be with tired and goaded will ;
She 'll only toil, the aching hollow,
The joyless blank of life to fill.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

And oh ! full oft, quite spent and weary,
Her hand will pause, her head decline ;
That labour seems so hard and dreary,
On which no ray of hope may shine.

Thus the pale blight of time and sorrow
Will shade with grey her soft, dark hair ;
Then comes the day that knows no morrow,
And death succeeds to long despair.

So speaks experience, sage and hoary ;
I see it plainly, know it well,
Like one who, having read a story,
Each incident therein can tell.

Touch not that ring ; 'twas his, the sire
Of that forsaken child ;
And nought his relics can inspire
Save memories sin-defiled.

I, who sat by his wife's death-bed,
I, who his daughter loved,
Could almost curse the guilty dead,
For woes the guiltless proved.

And heaven did curse—they found him laid,
When crime for wrath was ripe(?),
Cold—with the suicidal blade
Clutched in his desperate gripe.

'Twas near that long-deserted hut,
Which in the wood decays,
Death's axe, self-wielded, struck his root,
And lopped his desperate days.

You know the spot, where three black trees,
Lift up their branches fell,
And moaning, ceaseless as the seas,
Still seem, in every passing breeze,
The deed of blood to tell.

POEMS BY

They named him mad, and laid his bones
Where holier ashes lie ;
Yet doubt not that his spirit groans
In hell's eternity.

But, lo ! night, closing o'er the earth,
Infects our thoughts with gloom ;
Come, let us strive to rally mirth
Where glows a clear and tranquil hearth
In some more cheerful room.

III

THE WIFE'S WILL

SIT still—a word—a breath may break
(As light airs stir a sleeping lake)
The glassy calm that soothes my woes—
The sweet, the deep, the full repose.
Oh, leave me not ! for ever be
Thus, more than life itself to me !

Yes, close beside thee let me kneel—
Give me thy hand, that I may feel
The friend so true—so tried—so dear,
My heart's own chosen—indeed is near ;
And check me not—this hour divine
Belongs to me—is fully mine.

'Tis thy own hearth thou sitt'st beside,
After long absence, wandering wide ;
'Tis thy own wife reads in thine eyes
A promise clear of stormless skies ;
For faith and true love light the rays
Which shine responsive to her gaze.

Ay,—well that single tear may fall ;
Ten thousand might mine eyes recall,

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Which from their lids ran blinding fast,
In hours of grief, yet scarcely past ;
Well may'st thou speak of love to me,
For, oh ! most truly—I love thee !

Yet smile—for we are happy now.
Whence, then, that sadness on thy brow ?
What sayest thou ? ‘ We must once again,
Ere long, be severed by the main ! ’
I knew not this—I deemed no more
Thy step would err from Britain's shore.

‘ Duty commands ! ’ ‘Tis true—’tis just ;
Thy slightest word I wholly trust,
Nor by request, nor faintest sigh,
Would I to turn thy purpose try ;
But, William, hear my solemn vow—
Hear and confirm !—with thee I go.

‘ Distance and suffering,’ didst thou say ?
‘ Danger by night, and toil by day ’ ?
Oh, idle words and vain are these ;
Hear me ! I cross with thee the seas.
Such risk as thou must meet and dare,
I—thy true wife—will duly share.

Passive, at home, I will not pine ;
Thy toils, thy perils shall be mine ;
Grant this—and be hereafter paid
By a warm heart's devoted aid :
’Tis granted—with that yielding kiss,
Entered my soul unmingled bliss.

Thanks, William, thanks ! thy love has joy
Pure, undefiled with base alloy !
’Tis not a passion, false and blind,
Inspires, enchains, absorbs my mind ;
Worthy, I feel, art thou to be
Loved with my perfect energy.

POEMS BY

This evening now shall sweetly flow,
Lit by our clear fire's happy glow ;
And parting's peace-embittering fear
Is warned our hearts to come not near ;
For fate admits my soul's decree,
In bliss or bale—to go with thee !

IV

THE WOOD

BUT two miles more, and then we rest !

Well, there is still an hour of day,
And long the brightness of the West
Will light us on our devious way ;
Sit then, awhile, here in this wood—
So total is the solitude,
We safely may delay.

These massive roots afford a seat,
Which seems for weary travellers made.
There rest. The air is soft and sweet
In this sequestered forest glade,
And there are scents of flowers around,
The evening dew draws from the ground ;
How soothingly they spread !

Yes ; I was tired, but not at heart ;
No—that beats full of sweet content,
For now I have my natural part
Of action with adventure blent ;
Cast forth on the wide world with thee,
And all my once waste energy
To weighty purpose bent.

Yet—say'st thou, spies around us roam,
Our aims are termed conspiracy ?
Haply, no more our English home
An anchorage for us may be ?

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

That there is risk our mutual blood
May redden in some lonely wood
The knife of treachery ?

Say'st thou, that where we lodge each
night,
In each lone farm, or lonelier hall
Of Norman Peer—ere morning light
Suspicion must as duly fall,
As day returns—such vigilance
Presides and watches over France,
Such rigour governs all ?

I fear not, William ; dost thou fear ?
So that the knife does not divide,
It may be ever hovering near :
I could not tremble at thy side,
And strenuous love—like mine for thee—
Is buckler strong 'gainst treachery,
And turns its stab aside.

I am resolved that thou shalt learn
To trust my strength as I trust thine ;
I am resolved our souls shall burn
With equal, steady, mingling shine ;
Part of the field is conquered now,
Our lives in the same channel flow,
Along the self-same line ;

And while no groaning storm is heard,
Thou seem'st content it should be so,
But soon as comes a warning word
Of danger—straight thine anxious brow
Bends over me a mournful shade,
As doubting if my powers are made
To ford the floods of woe.

POEMS BY

Know, then, it is my spirit swells,
And drinks, with eager joy, the air
Of freedom—where at last it dwells,
Chartered, a common task to share
With thee, and then it stirs alert,
And pants to learn what menaced hurt
Demands for thee its care.

Remember, I have crossed the deep,
And stood with thee on deck, to gaze
On waves that rose in threatening heap,
While stagnant lay a heavy haze,
Dimly confusing sea with sky,
And baffling, even, the pilot's eye,
Intent to thread the maze—

Of rocks, on Bretagne's dangerous coast,
And find a way to steer our band
To the one point obscure, which lost,
Flung us, as victims, on the strand ;—
All, elsewhere, gleamed the Gallic sword,
And not a wherry could be moored
Along the guarded land.

I feared not then—I fear not now ;
The interest of each stirring scene
Wakes a new sense, a welcome glow,
In every nerve and bounding vein ;
Alike on turbid Channel sea,
Or in still wood of Normandy,
I feel as born again.

The rain descended that wild morn
When, anchoring in the cove at last,
Our band, all weary and forlorn,
Ashore, like wave-worn sailors, cast—
Sought for a sheltering roof in vain,
And scarce could scanty food obtain
To break their morning fast.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Thou didst thy crust with me divide,
Thou didst thy cloak around me fold ;
And, sitting silent by thy side,
I ate the bread in peace untold :
Given kindly from thy hand, 'twas sweet
As costly fare or princely treat
On royal plate of gold.

Sharp blew the sleet upon my face,
And, rising wild, the gusty wind
Drove on those thundering waves apace,
Our crew so late had left behind ;
But, spite of frozen shower and storm,
So close to thee, my heart beat warm,
And tranquil slept my mind.

So now—nor foot-sore, nor oppressed
With walking all this August day,
I taste a heaven in this brief rest,
This gipsy-halt beside the way.
England's wild flowers are fair to view,
Like balm is England's summer dew,
Like gold her sunset ray.

But the white violets, growing here,
Are sweeter than I yet have seen,
And ne'er did dew so pure and clear
Distil on forest mosses green,
As now, called forth by summer heat,
Perfumes our cool and fresh retreat—
These fragrant limes between.

That sunset ! Look beneath the boughs,
Over the copse—beyond the hills ;
How soft, yet deep and warm, it glows,
And heaven with rich suffusion fills ;
With hues where still the opal's tint,
Its gleam of prisoned fire, is blent,
Where flame through azure thrills !

POEMS BY

Depart we now—for fast will fade
That solemn splendour of decline,
And deep must be the after-shade,
As stars alone to-night will shine ;
No moon is destined—pale—to gaze
On such a day's vast phoenix blaze,
A day in fires decayed !

There—hand-in-hand we tread again
The mazes of this varying wood,
And soon, amid a cultured plain,
Girt in with fertile solitude,
We shall our resting-place descry,
Marked by one roof-tree, towering high
Above a farmstead rude.

Refreshed, ere long, with rustic fare,
We 'll seek a couch of dreamless ease ;
Courage will guard thy heart from fear,
And Love give mine divinest peace :
To-morrow brings more dangerous toil,
And through its conflict and turmoil
We 'll pass, as God shall please.

The preceding composition refers, doubtless, to the scenes acted in France during the last year of the Consulate.—C. B.

V

FRANCES

SHE will not sleep, for fear of dreams,
But, rising, quits her restless bed,
And walks where some beclouded beams
Of moonlight through the hall are shed.

Obedient to the goad of grief,
Her steps, now fast, now lingering slow,
In varying motion seek relief
From the Eumenides of woe.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Wringing her hands, at intervals—
But long as mute as phantom dim—
She glides along the dusky walls,
Under the black oak rafters grim.

The close air of the grated tower
Stifles a heart that scarce can beat,
And, though so late and lone the hour,
Forth pass her wandering, faltering feet ;

And on the pavement spread before
The long front of the mansion grey,
Her steps imprint the night-frost hoar,
Which pale on grass and granite lay.

Not long she stayed where misty moon
And shimmering stars could on her look,
But through the garden archway soon
Her strange and gloomy path she took.

Some firs, coëval with the tower,
Their straight black boughs stretched o'er
her head ;

Unseen, beneath this sable bower,
Rustled her dress and rapid tread.

There was an alcove in that shade,
Screening a rustic seat and stand ;
Weary, she sat her down, and laid
Her hot brow on her burning hand.

To solitude and to the night
Some words she now, in murmurs, said ;
And trickling through her fingers white,
Some tears of misery she shed.

‘ God help me in my grievous need,
God help me in my inward pain ;
Which cannot ask for pity’s need,
Which has no licence to complain ;

POEMS BY

‘ Which must be borne ; yet who can bear,
Hours long, days long, a constant weight—
The yoke of absolute despair,
A suffering wholly desolate ?

‘ Who can for ever crush the heart,
Restrain its throbbing, curb its life ?
Dissemble truth with ceaseless art,
With outward calm mask inward strife ? ’

She waited—as for some reply ;
The still and cloudy night gave none ;
Ere long, with deep-drawn, trembling sigh,
Her heavy plaint again begun.

‘ Unloved—I love ; unwept—I weep ;
Grief I restrain—hope I repress :
Vain is this anguish—fixed and deep ;
Vainer, desires and dreams of bliss :¹

‘ My love awakes no love again,
My tears collect, and fall unfelt ;
My sorrow touches none with pain,
My humble hopes to nothing melt.

‘ For me the universe is dumb,
Stone-deaf, and blank, and wholly blind ;
Life I must bound, existence sum
In the strait limits of one mind ;

‘ That mind my own. Oh ! narrow cell ;
Dark—imageless—a living tomb !
There must I sleep, there wake and dwell
Content,—with palsy, pain, and gloom.’

Again she paused ; a moan of pain,
A stifled sob, alone was heard ;
Long silence followed—then again
Her voice the stagnant midnight stirred :

¹ Compare with first verse of REASON, p. 219.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

‘ Must it be so ? Is this my fate ?
Can I nor struggle, nor contend ?
And am I doomed for years to wait,
Watching death’s lingering axe descend ?

‘ And when it falls, and when I die,
What follows ? Vacant nothingness ?
The blank of lost identity ?
Erasure both of pain and bliss ?

‘ I ’ve heard of Heaven—I would believe ;
For if this earth indeed be all,
Who longest lives may deepest grieve ;
Most blest, whom sorrows soonest call.

‘ Oh ! leaving disappointment here,
Will man find hope on yonder coast ?
Hope, which, on earth, shines never clear,
And oft in clouds is wholly lost.

‘ Will he hope’s source of light behold,
Fruition’s spring, where doubts expire,
And drink, in waves of living gold,
Contentment, full, for long desire ?

‘ Will he find bliss, which here he dreamed ?
Rest, which was weariness on earth ?
Knowledge, which, if o’er life it beamed,
Served but to prove it void of worth ?

‘ Will he find love without lust’s leaven,
Love fearless, tearless, perfect, pure,
To all with equal bounty given ;
In all, unfeigned, unfailing, sure ?

‘ Will he, from penal sufferings free,
Released from shroud and wormy clod,
All calm and glorious, rise and see
Creation’s Sire—Existence’ God ?

POEMS BY

‘ Then, glancing back on Time’s brief woes,
Will he behold them, fading, fly ;
Swept from Eternity’s repose,
Like sullyng cloud from pure blue sky ?

‘ If so, endure, my weary frame ;
And when thy anguish strikes too deep,
And when all troubled burns life’s flame,
Think of the quiet, final sleep ;

‘ Think of the glorious waking-hour,
Which will not dawn on grief and tears,
But on a ransomed spirit’s power,
Certain and free from mortal fears.

‘ Seek now thy couch, and lie till morn,
Then from thy chamber, calm, descend,
With mind nor tossed, nor anguish-torn,
But tranquil, fixed, to wait the end.

‘ And when thy opening eyes shall see
Mementos on the chamber wall,
Of one who has forgotten thee,
Shed not the tear of acrid gall.

‘ The tear which, welling from the heart,
Burns where its drop corrosive falls,
And makes each nerve in torture start,
At feelings it too well recalls :

‘ When the sweet hope of being loved
Threw Eden-sunshine on Life’s way ;
When every sense and feeling proved
Expectancy of brightest day :

‘ When the hand trembled to receive
A thrilling clasp, which seemed so near,
And the heart ventured to believe
Another heart esteemed it dear :

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

‘ When words, half love, all tenderness,
Were hourly heard, as hourly spoken,
When the long sunny days of bliss
Only by moonlight nights were broken :

‘ Till, drop by drop, the cup of joy,
Filled full, with purple light was glowing,
And Faith, which watched it sparkling high,
Still never dreamt the overflowing.

‘ It fell not with a sudden crashing,
It poured not out like open sluice ;
No, sparkling still, and redly flashing,
Drained, drop by drop, the generous juice.

‘ I saw it sink, and strove to taste it—
My eager lips approached the brim ;
The movement only seemed to waste it—
It sank to dregs, all harsh and dim.

‘ These I have drunk, and they for ever
Have poisoned life and love for me ;
A draught from Sodom’s lake could never
More fiery, salt, and bitter be.

‘ Oh ! Love was all a thin illusion ;
Joy but the desert’s flying stream ;
And glancing back on long delusion
My memory grasps a hollow dream.

‘ Yet whence that wondrous change of feeling,
I never knew, and cannot learn ;
Nor why my lover’s eye, congealing,
Grew cold and clouded, proud and stern.

‘ Nor wherefore, friendship’s forms forgetting,
He careless left and cool withdrew,
Nor spoke of grief nor fond regretting,
Nor even one glance of comfort threw.

POEMS BY

‘ And neither word nor token sending,
Of kindness, since the parting day,
His course, for distant regions bending,
Went, self-contained and calm, away.

‘ O bitter, blighting, keen sensation,
Which will not weaken, cannot die,
Hasten thy work of desolation,
And let my tortured spirit fly !

‘ Vain as the passing gale, my crying ;
Though lightning-struck, I must live on ;
I know at heart there is no dying
Of love, and ruined hope, alone.

‘ Still strong and young, and warm with vigour,
Though scathed, I long shall greenly grow ;
And many a storm of wildest rigour
Shall yet break o’er my shivered bough.

‘ Rebellious now to blank inertion,
My unused strength demands a task ;
Travel, and toil, and full exertion
Are the last, only boon I ask.

‘ Whence, then, this vain and barren dreaming
Of death, and dubious life to come ?
I see a nearer beacon gleaming
Over dejection’s sea of gloom.

‘ The very wildness of my sorrow
Tells me I yet have innate force ;
My track of life has been too narrow,
Effort shall trace a broader course.

‘ The world is not in yonder tower,
Earth is not prisoned in that room,
’Mid whose dark panels, hour by hour,
I ’ve sat, the slave and prey of gloom.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

‘ One feeling—turned to utter anguish,
Is not my being’s only aim ;
When, lorn and loveless, life will languish,
But courage can revive the flame.

‘ He, when he left me, went a-roving
To sunny climes beyond the sea ;
And I, the weight of woe removing,
Am free and fetterless as he.

‘ New scenes, new language, skies less
clouded,
May once more wake the wish to live ;
Strange foreign towns, astir and crowded,
New pictures to the mind can give.

‘ New forms and faces, passing ever,
May hide the one I shall retain,
Defined and fixed, and fading never,
Stamped deep on vision, heart, and brain.

‘ And we might meet—time may have changed
him,
Chance may reveal the mystery,
The secret influence which estranged him ;
Love may restore him yet to me.

‘ False thought—false hope—in scorn be
banished !
I am not loved—nor loved have been !
Recall not, then, the dreams scarce vanished ;
Traitors ! mislead me not again !

‘ To words like yours I bid defiance,
’Tis such my mental wreck have made ;
Of God alone, and self-reliance,
I ask for solace—hope for aid.

POEMS BY

‘ Morn comes—and ere meridian glory
O’er these, my natal woods, shall smile,
Both lonely wood and mansion hoary
I ’ll leave behind, full many a mile.’

VI

GILBERT

1. THE GARDEN

ABOVE the city hung the moon,
Right o’er a plot of ground
Where flowers and orchard-trees were fenced
With lofty walls around :
’Twas Gilbert’s garden—there to-night
Awhile he walked alone ;
And, tired with sedentary toil,
Mused where the moonlight shone.

This garden, in a city heart,
Lay still as houseless wild,
Though many-windowed mansion fronts
Were round it closely piled ;
But thick their walls, and those within
Lived lives by noise unstirred ;
Like wafting of an angel’s wing,
Time’s flight by them was heard.

Some soft piano-notes alone
Were sweet as faintly given,
Where ladies, doubtless, cheered the hearth
With song that winter-even.
The city’s many-mingled sounds
Rose like the hum of ocean ;
They rather lulled the heart than roused
Its pulse to faster motion.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Gilbert has paced the single walk
An hour, yet is not weary ;
And, though it be a winter night,
He feels nor cold nor dreary.
The prime of life is in his veins,
And sends his blood fast flowing,
And Fancy's fervour warms the thoughts
Now in his bosom glowing.

Those thoughts recur to early love,
Or what he love would name,
Though haply Gilbert's secret deeds
Might other title claim.
Such theme not oft his mind absorbs,
He to the world clings fast,
And too much for the present lives,
To linger o'er the past.

But now the evening's deep repose
Has glided to his soul ;
That moonlight falls on Memory,
And shows her fading scroll.
One name appears in every line
The gentle rays shine o'er,
And still he smiles and still repeats
That one name—Elinor.

There is no sorrow in his smile,
No kindness in his tone ;
The triumph of a selfish heart
Speaks coldly there alone.
He says : ' She loved me more than life ;
And truly it was sweet
To see so fair a woman kneel
In bondage at my feet.

POEMS BY

‘ There was a sort of quiet bliss
To be so deeply loved,
To gaze on trembling eagerness
And sit myself unmoved ;
And when it pleased my pride to grant
At last some rare caress,
To feel the fever of that hand
My fingers deigned to press.

‘ ’Twas sweet to see her strive to hide
What every glance revealed ;
Endowed, the while, with despot-might
Her destiny to wield.
I knew myself no perfect man,
Nor, as she deemed, divine ;
I knew that I was glorious—but
By her reflected shine ;

‘ Her youth, her native energy,
Her powers new-born and fresh—
’Twas these with Godhead sanctified
My sensual frame of flesh.
Yet, like a god did I descend
At last to meet her love ;
And, like a god, I then withdrew
To my own heaven above.

‘ And never more could she invoke
My presence to her sphere ;
No prayer, no plaint, no cry of hers
Could win my awful ear.
I knew her blinded constancy
Would ne’er my deeds betray,
And, calm in conscience, whole in heart,
I went my tranquil way.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

‘ Yet, sometimes, I still feel a wish,
The fond and flattering pain
Of passion’s anguish to create
In her young breast again.
Bright was the lustre of her eyes
When they caught fire from mine ;
If I had power—this very hour,
Again I’d light their shine.

‘ But where she is, or how she lives,
I have no clue to know ;
I’ve heard she long my absence pined,
And left her home in woe.
But busied, then, in gathering gold,
As I am busied now,
I could not turn from such pursuit,
To keep(?) a broken vow.

‘ Nor could I give to fatal risk
The fame I ever prized ;
Even now, I fear, that precious fame
Is too much compromised.’
An inward trouble dims his eye,
Some riddle he would solve ;
Some method to unloose a knot,
His anxious thoughts revolve.

He, pensive, leans against a tree,
A leafy evergreen—
The boughs the moonlight intercept,
And hide him like a screen ;
He starts—the tree shakes with his tremor,
Yet nothing near him passed ;
He hurries up the garden alley
In strangely sudden haste.

POEMS BY

With shaking hands he lifts the latchet,
Steps o'er the threshold stone ;
The heavy door slips from his fingers—
It shuts, and he is gone.
What touched, transfixed, appalled his soul ?—
A nervous thought, no more ;
'Twill sink like stone in placid pool,
And calm close smoothly o'er.

2. THE PARLOUR

Warm is the parlour atmosphere,
Serene the lamp's soft light ;
The vivid embers, red and clear,
Proclaim a frosty night.
Books, varied, on the table lie,
Three children o'er them bend,
And all, with curious, eager eye,
The turning leaf attend.

Picture and tale alternately
Their simple hearts delight,
And interest deep, and tempered glee,
Illume their aspects bright.
The parents, from their fireside place,
Behold that pleasant scene,
And joy is on the mother's face,
Pride in the father's mien.

As Gilbert sees his blooming wife,
Beholds his children fair,
No thought has he of transient strife,
Or past though piercing fear.
The voice of happy infancy
Lisps sweetly in his ear,
His wife, with pleased and peaceful eye,
Sits, kindly smiling, near.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

The fire glows on her silken dress,
And shows its ample grace,
And warmly tints each hazel tress,
Curled soft around her face.
The beauty that in youth he wooed
Is beauty still unfaded ;
The brow of ever placid mood
No churlish grief has shaded.

Prosperity, in Gilbert's home,
Abides the guest of years ;
There Want or Discord never come,
And seldom Toil or Tears.
The carpets bear the peaceful print
Of Comfort's velvet tread,
And golden gleams, from plenty sent,
In every nook are shed.

The very silken spaniel seems
Of quiet ease to tell,
As near its mistress' feet it dreams,
Sunk in a cushion's swell ;
And smiles seem native to the eyes
Of those sweet children three ;
They have but looked on tranquil skies,
And know not Misery.

Alas ! that Misery should come
In such an hour as this ;
Why could she not so calm a home
A little longer miss ?
But she is now within the door,
Her steps advancing glide ;
Her sullen shade has crossed the floor,
She stands at Gilbert's side.

POEMS BY

She lays her hand upon his heart,
It bounds with agony ;
His fireside chair shakes with the start
That shook the garden tree.
His wife towards the children looks,
She does not mark his mien ;
The children, bending o'er their books,
His terror have not seen.

In his own home, by his own hearth,
He sits in solitude,
And circled round with light and mirth,
Cold horror chills his blood.
His mind would hold with desperate clutch
The scene that round him lies ;
No—changed, as by some wizard's touch,
The present prospect flies.

A tumult vague—a viewless strife
His futile struggles crush ;
'Twixt him and his an unknown life
And unknown feelings rush.
He sees—but scarce can language paint
The tissue fancy weaves ;
For words oft give but echo faint
Of thoughts the mind conceives.

Noise, tumult strange, and darkness dim
Efface both light and quiet ;
No shape is in those shadows grim,
No voice in that wild riot.
Sustained and strong, a wondrous blast
Above and round him blows ;
A greenish gloom, dense overcast,
Each moment denser grows.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

He nothing knows—nor clearly sees,
Resistance checks his breath,
The high, impetuous, ceaseless breeze
Blows on him cold as death.
And still the undulating gloom
Mocks sight with formless motion :
Was such sensation Jonah's doom,
'Gulfed in the depths of ocean ?

Streaking the air, the nameless vision,
Fast-driven, deep-sounding, flows ;
Oh ! whence its source, and what its mission ?
How will its terrors close ?
Long-sweeping, rushing, vast and void,
The universe it swallows ;
And still the dark, devouring tide
A typhoon tempest follows.

More slow it rolls ; its furious race
Sinks to its solemn gliding ;
The stunning roar, the wind's wild chase,
To stillness are subsiding ;
And, slowly borne along, a form
The shapeless chaos varies ;
Poised in the eddy of the storm,
Before the eye it tarries :

A woman drowned—sunk in the deep,
On a long wave reclining ;
The circling waters' crystal sweep,
Like glass, her shape enshrining.
Her pale dead face, to Gilbert turned,
Seems as in sleep reposing ;
A feeble light, now first discerned,
The features well disclosing.

POEMS BY

No effort from the haunted air
The ghastly scene could banish ;
That hovering wave, arrested there,
Rolled—throbbed—but did not vanish.
If Gilbert upward turned his gaze,
He saw the ocean-shadow ;
If he looked down, the endless seas
Lay green as summer meadow.

And straight before, the pale corpse lay,
Upborne by air or billow,
So near, he could have touched the spray
That churned around its pillow.
The hollow anguish of the face
Had moved a fiend to sorrow ;
Not death's fixed calm could rase the trace
Of suffering's deep-worn furrow.

All moved ; a strong returning blast,
The mass of waters raising,
Bore wave and passive carcase past,
While Gilbert yet was gazing.
Deep in her isle-conceiving womb
It seemed the ocean thundered,
And soon, by realms of rushing gloom,
Were seer and phantom sundered.

Then swept some timbers from a wreck,
On following surges riding ;
Then seaweed, in the turbid rack
Uptorn, went slowly gliding.
The horrid shade, by slow degrees,
A beam of light defeated,
And then the roar of raving seas,
Fast, far, and faint, retreated.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

And all was gone—gone like a mist,
Corse, billows, tempest, wreck ;
Three children close to Gilbert pressed,
And clung around his neck.
‘ Good-night ! good-night ! ’ the prattlers said,
And kissed their father’s cheek ;
’Twas now the hour their quiet bed
And placid rest to seek.

The mother with her offspring goes
To hear their evening prayer ;
She nought of Gilbert’s vision knows,
And nought of his despair.
Yet, pitying God, abridge the time
Of anguish, now his fate !
Though, haply, great has been his crime,
Thy mercy, too, is great.

Gilbert, at length, uplifts his head,
Bent for some moments low,
And there is neither grief nor dread
Upon his subtle brow.
For well can he his feelings task,
And well his looks command ;
His features well his heart can mask,
With smiles and smoothness bland.

Gilbert has reasoned with his mind—
He says ’twas all a dream ;
He strives his inward sight to blind
Against truth’s inward beam.
He pitied not that shadowy thing,
When it was flesh and blood ;
Nor now can pity’s balmy spring
Refresh his arid mood.

POEMS BY

‘ And if that dream has spoken truth,’
Thus musingly he says ;
‘ If Elinor be dead, in sooth,
Such chance the shock repays :
A net was woven round my feet,
I scarce could further go ;
Ere shame had forced a fast retreat,
Dishonour brought me low.

‘ Conceal her then, deep, silent sea,
Give her a secret grave !
She sleeps in peace, and I am free,
No longer terror’s slave :
And homage still, from all the world,
Shall greet my spotless name,
Since surges break and waves are curled
Above its threatened shame.’

3. THE WELCOME HOME

Above the city hangs the moon,
Some clouds are boding rain ;
Gilbert, erewhile on journey gone,
To-night comes home again.
Ten years have passed above his head,
Each year has brought him gain ;
His prosperous life has smoothly sped,
Without or tear or stain.

’Tis somewhat late—the city clocks
Twelve deep vibrations toll,
As Gilbert at the portal knocks,
Which is his journey’s goal.
The street is still and desolate,
The moon hid by a cloud ;
Gilbert, impatient, will not wait,—
His second knock peals loud.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

The clocks are hushed—there 's not a light
In any window nigh,
And not a single planet bright
Looks from the clouded sky ;
The air is raw, the rain descends,
A bitter north-wind blows ;
His cloak the traveller scarce defends—
Will not the door unclose ?

He knocks the third time, and the last ;
His summons now they hear :
Within, a footstep, hurrying fast,
Is heard approaching near.
The bolt is drawn, the clanking chain
Falls to the floor of stone ;
And Gilbert to his heart will strain
His wife and children soon.

The hand that lifts the latchet, holds
A candle to his sight,
And Gilbert, on the step, beholds
A woman clad in white.
Lo ! water from her dripping dress
Runs on the streaming floor ;
From every dark and clinging tress
The drops incessant pour.

There 's none but her to welcome him ;
She holds the candle high,
And, motionless in form and limb,
Stands cold and silent nigh ;
There 's sand and seaweed on her robe,
Her hollow eyes are blind ;
No pulse in such a frame can throb,
No life is there defined.

POEMS BY

Gilbert turned ashy-white, but still
His lips vouchsafed no cry ;
He spurred his strength and master-will
To pass the figure by,—
But, moving slow, it faced him straight,
It would not flinch nor quail :
Then first did Gilbert's strength abate,
His stony firmness fail.

He sank upon his knees and prayed ;
The shape stood rigid there ;
He called aloud for human aid,
No human aid was near.
An accent strange did thus repeat
Heaven's stern but just decree :
' The measure thou to her didst mete,
To thee shall measured be ! '

Gilbert sprang from his bended knees,
By the pale spectre pushed,
And, wild as one whom demons seize,
Up the hall-staircase rushed ;
Entered his chamber—near the bed
Sheathed steel and firearms hung—
Impelled by maniac purpose dread
He chose those stores among.

Across his throat a keen-edged knife
With vigorous hand he drew ;
The wound was wide—his outraged life
Rushed rash and redly through.
And thus died, by a shameful death,
A wise and worldly man,
Who never drew but selfish breath
Since first his life began.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

VII

LIFE

LIFE, believe, is not a dream
So dark as sages say ;
Oft a little morning rain
Foretells a pleasant day.
Sometimes there are clouds of gloom,
But these are transient all ;
If the shower will make the roses bloom,
Oh, why lament its fall ?
Rapidly, merrily,
Life's sunny hours flit by,
Gratefully, cheerily,
Enjoy them as they fly !

What though Death at times steps in,
And calls our best away ?
What though Sorrow seems to win,
O'er Hope, a heavy sway ?
Yet Hope again elastic springs,
Unconquered, though she fell ;
Still buoyant are her golden wings,
Still strong to bear us well.
Manfully, fearlessly,
The day of trial bear,
For gloriously, victoriously,
Can courage quell despair !

This poem appears on the last page of the MS. of an unpublished story by Charlotte Brontë, entitled 'Caroline Vernon,' dated March 26, 1839. On another MS. copy of the poem Charlotte Brontë has written, 'Copied at Bruxelles, 1843.'

POEMS BY

VIII

THE LETTER

WHAT is she writing ? Watch her now,
How fast her fingers move !
How eagerly her youthful brow
Is bent in thought above !
Her long curls, drooping, shade the light,
She puts them quick aside,
Nor knows that band of crystals bright
Her hasty touch untied.
It slips adown her silken dress,
Falls glittering at her feet ;
Unmarked it falls, for she no less
Pursues her labour sweet.

The very loveliest hour that shines
Is in that deep blue sky ;
The golden sun of June declines,
It has not caught her eye.
The cheerful lawn, and unclosed gate,
The white road, far away,
In vain for her light footsteps wait,
She comes not forth to-day.
There is an open door of glass
Close by that lady's chair,
From thence, to slopes of mossy grass,
Descends a marble stair.

Tall plants of bright and spicy bloom
Around the threshold grow ;
Their leaves and blossoms shade the room
From that sun's deepening glow.
Why does she not a moment glance
Between the clustering flowers,
And mark in heaven the radiant dance
Of evening's rosy hours ?

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Oh, look again ! Still fixed her eye,
Unsmiling, earnest, still,
And fast her pen and fingers fly,
Urged by her eager will.

Her soul is in the absorbing task ;
To whom, then, does she write ?
Nay, watch her still more closely, ask
Her own eyes' serious light ;
Where do they turn, as now her pen
Hangs o'er the unfinished line ?
Whence fell the tearful gleam that then
Did in their dark spheres shine ?
The summer-parlour looks so dark,
When from that sky you turn,
And from the expanse of that green park
You scarce may aught discern.

Yet o'er the piles of porcelain rare,
O'er flower-stand, couch, and vase,
Sloped, as if leaning on the air,
One picture meets the gaze.
'Tis there she turns ; you may not see,
Distinct, what form defines
The clouded mass of mystery
Yon broad gold frame confines.
But look again ; inured to shade
Your eyes now faintly trace
A stalwart form, a massive head,
A firm, determined face.

Black Spanish locks, a sunburnt cheek,
A brow high, broad, and white,
Where every furrow seems to speak
Of mind and moral might.
Is that her god ? I cannot tell ;
Her eye a moment met
The impending picture, then it fell
Darkened and dimmed and wet.

POEMS BY

A moment more, her task is done,
And sealed the letter lies ;
And now, towards the setting sun
She turns her tearful eyes.

Those tears flow over, wonder not,
For by the inscription see
In what a strange and distant spot
Her heart of hearts must be !
Three seas and many a league of land
That letter must pass o'er,
Ere read by him to whose loved hand
'Tis sent from England's shore.
Remote colonial wilds detain
Her husband, loved though stern ;
She, 'mid that smiling English scene,
Weeps for his wished return.

An early draft of this poem is dated June 1837.

IX

REGRET

LONG ago I wished to leave
' The house where I was born ' ;
Long ago I used to grieve,
My home seemed so forlorn.
In other years, its silent rooms
Were filled with haunting fears ;
Now, their very memory comes
O'ercharged with tender tears.

Life and marriage I have known,
Things once deemed so bright ;
Now, how utterly is flown
Every ray of light !

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

'Mid the unknown sea of life
I no blest isle have found ;
At last, through all its wild waves' strife,
My bark is homeward bound.

Farewell, dark and rolling deep !
Farewell, foreign shore !
Open, in unclouded sweep,
Thou glorious realm before !
Yet, though I had safely passed
That weary, vexèd main,
One loved voice, through surge and blast,
Could call me back again.

Though the soul's bright morning rose
O'er Paradise for me,
William ! even from Heaven's repose
I 'd turn, invoked by thee !
Storm nor surge should e'er arrest
My soul, exulting then :
All my Heaven was once thy breast,
Would it were mine again !

An early draft of the above poem will be found on pp. 202-203. Another MS. of this poem is entitled 'Lament,' and dated July 1837. There is also a draft of the poem, in the author's autograph, which has no title, and is dated May 30, 1837.

X

PRESENTIMENT

'SISTER, you 've sat there all the day,
Come to the hearth awhile ;
The wind so wildly sweeps away,
The clouds so darkly pile.
That open book has lain, unread,
For hours upon your knee ;
You 've never smiled nor turned your head ;
What can you, sister, see ?'

POEMS BY

‘ Come hither, Jane, look down the field ;
How dense a mist creeps on !
The path, the hedge, are both concealed,
Even the white gate is gone ;
No landscape through the fog I trace,
No hill with pastures green ;
All featureless is Nature’s face,
All masked in clouds her mien.

‘ Scarce is the rustle of a leaf
Heard in our garden now ;
The year grows old, its days wax brief,
The tresses leave its brow.
The rain drives fast before the wind,
The sky is blank and grey ;
O Jane, what sadness fills the mind
On such a dreary day ! ’

‘ You think too much, my sister dear ;
You sit too long alone ;
What though November days be drear ?
Full soon will they be gone.
I ’ve swept the hearth, and placed your chair,
Come, Emma, sit by me ;
Our own fireside is never drear,
Though late and wintry wane the year,
Though rough the night may be.’

‘ The peaceful glow of our fireside
Imparts no peace to me :
My thoughts would rather wander wide
Than rest, dear Jane, with thee.
I ’m on a distant journey bound,
And if, about my heart,
Too closely kindred ties were wound,
’Twould break when forced to part.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

“ ‘ ‘ Soon will November days be o’er ”—
Well have you spoken, Jane :
My own forebodings tell me more—
For me, I know by presage sure,
They ’ll ne’er return again :
Ere long, nor sun nor storm to me
Will bring or joy or gloom ;
They reach not that Eternity
Which soon will be my home.’ ”

Eight months are gone, the summer sun
Sets in a glorious sky ;
A quiet field, all green and lone,
Receives its rosy dye.
Jane sits upon a shaded stile,
Alone she sits there now ;
Her head rests on her hand the while
And thought o’ercasts her brow.

She ’s thinking of one winter’s day,
A few short months ago,
When Emma’s bier was borne away
O’er wastes of frozen snow.
She ’s thinking how that drifted snow
Dissolved in spring’s first gleam,
And how her sister’s memory now
Fades, even as fades a dream.

The snow will whiten earth again,
But Emma comes no more ;
She left, ’mid winter’s sleet and rain,
This world for Heaven’s far shore.
On Beulah’s hills she wanders now,
On Eden’s tranquil plain ;
To her shall Jane hereafter go,
She ne’er shall come to Jane !

The original draft of this poem is dated May 1837. Another MS. copy is dated July 11, 1837.

POEMS BY

XI

THE TEACHER'S MONOLOGUE

THE room is quiet, thoughts alone
People its mute tranquillity ;
The yoke put off, the long task done,—
I am, as it is bliss to be,
Still and untroubled. Now, I see,
For the first time, how soft the day
O'er waveless water, stirless tree,
Silent and sunny, wings its way.
Now, as I watch that distant hill,
So faint, so blue, so far removed,
Sweet dreams of home my heart may fill,
That home where I am known and loved :
It lies beyond ; yon azure brow
Parts me from all Earth holds for me ;
And, morn and eve, my yearnings flow
Thitherward tending, changelessly.
My happiest hours, ay ! all the time,
I love to keep in memory,
Lapsed among moors, ere life's first prime
Decayed to dark anxiety.

Sometimes, I think a narrow heart
Makes me thus mourn those far away,
And keeps my love so far apart
From friends and friendships of to-day ;
Sometimes, I think 'tis but a dream
I treasure up so jealously,
All the sweet thoughts I live on seem
To vanish into vacancy :
And then, this strange, coarse world around
Seems all that's palpable and true ;
And every sight and every sound
Combine my spirit to subdue

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

To aching grief ; so void and lone
Is Life and Earth—so worse than vain,
The hopes that, in my own heart sown,
And cherished by such sun and rain
As Joy and transient Sorrow shed,
Have ripened to a harvest there :
Alas ! methinks I hear it said,
‘ Thy golden sheaves are empty air.’
All fades away ; my very home
I think will soon be desolate ;
I hear, at times, a warning come
Of bitter partings at its gate ;
And, if I should return and see
The hearth-fire quenched, the vacant chair ;
And hear it whispered mournfully,
That farewells have been spoken there,
What shall I do, and whither turn ?
Where look for peace ? When cease to mourn ?

The original MS. of the first part of ‘ The Teacher’s Monologue ’ is dated May 15, 1837.

’Tis not the air I wished to play,
The strain I used to sing ;
My wilful spirit slipped away
And struck another string.
I neither wanted smile nor tear,
Bright joy nor bitter woe,
But just a song that sweet and clear,
Though haply sad, might flow.

A quiet song, to solace me
When sleep refused to come ;
A strain to chase despondency
When sorrowful for home.
In vain I try ; I cannot sing ;
All feels so cold and dead ;
No wild distress, no gushing spring
Of tears in anguish shed ;

POEMS BY

But all the impatient gloom of one
Who waits a distant day,
When, some great task of suffering done,
Repose shall toil repay.
For youth departs, and pleasure flies,
And life consumes away,
And youth's rejoicing ardour dies
Beneath this drear delay ;

And Patience, weary with her yoke,
Is yielding to despair,
And Health's elastic spring is broke
Beneath the strain of care.
Life will be gone ere I have lived ;
Where now is Life's first prime ?
I've worked and studied, longed and grieved,
Through all that rosy time.

To toil, to think, to long, to grieve,—
Is such my future fate ?
The morn was dreary, must the eve
Be also desolate ?
Well, such a life at least makes Death
A welcome, wished-for friend ;
Then, aid me, Reason, Patience, Faith,
To suffer to the end !

The original MS. of the second part of ' The Teacher's Monologue ' is dated May 12, 1837.

XII

PASSION

SOME have won a wild delight,
By daring wilder sorrow ;
Could I gain thy love to-night,
I'd hazard death to-morrow.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Could the battle-struggle earn
One kind glance from thine eye,
How this withering heart would burn,
The heady fight to try !

Welcome nights of broken sleep,
And days of carnage cold,
Could I deem that thou wouldst weep
To hear my perils told.

Tell me, if with wandering bands
I roam full far away,
Wilt thou to those distant lands
In spirit ever stray !

Wild, long, a trumpet sounds afar ;
Bid me—bid me go
Where Seik and Briton meet in war,
On Indian Sutlej's flow.

Blood has dyed the Sutlej's waves
With scarlet stain, I know ;
Indus' borders yawn with graves,
Yet, command me go !

Though rank and high the holocaust
Of nations steams to heaven,
Glad I 'd join the death-doomed host,
Were but the mandate given.

Passion's strength should nerve my arm,
Its ardour stir my life,
Till human force to that dread charm
Should yield and sink in wild alarm,
Like trees to tempest-strife.

If, hot from war, I seek thy love,
Darest thou turn aside ?
Darest thou then my fire reprove,
By scorn, and maddening pride ?

POEMS BY

No—my will shall yet control
Thy will so high and free,
And love shall tame that haughty soul—
Yes—tenderest love for me.

I'll read my triumph in thine eyes,
Behold, and prove the change ;
Then leave, perchance, my noble prize,
Once more in arms to range.

I'd die when all the foam is up,
The bright wine sparkling high ;
Nor wait till in the exhausted cup
Life's dull dregs only lie.

Then Love thus crowned with sweet reward,
Hope blessed with fulness large,
I'd mount the saddle, draw the sword,
And perish in the charge !

The MS. of this poem is dated December 12, 1841, and is marked 'Finished at Upperwood.' Charlotte Brontë was a governess at Upperwood House, Rawdon, Yorkshire, from March 2 until December 24, 1841.

XIII

PREFERENCE

Not in scorn do I reprove thee,
Not in pride thy vows I waive,
But, believe, I could not love thee,
Wert thou prince and I a slave.
These, then, are thine oaths of passion ?
This, thy tenderness for me ?
Judged, even, by thine own confession,
Thou art steeped in perfidy.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Having vanquished, thou wouldst leave
me !

Thus I read thee long ago ;
Therefore, dared I not deceive thee,
Even with friendship's gentle show.
Therefore, with impassive coldness
Have I ever met thy gaze ;
Though, full oft, with daring boldness,
Thou thine eyes to mine didst raise.
Why that smile ? Thou now art deeming
This my coldness all untrue,—
But a mask of frozen seeming,
Hiding secret fires from view.
Touch my hand, thou self-deceiver ;
Nay—be calm, for I am so :
Does it burn ? Does my lip quiver ?
Has mine eye a troubled glow ?
Canst thou call a moment's colour
To my forehead—to my cheek ?
Canst thou tinge their tranquil pallor
With one flattering, feverish streak ?
Am I marble ? What ! no woman
Could so calm before thee stand ?
Nothing living, sentient, human,
Could so coldly take thy hand ?
Yes—a sister might, a mother :
My good-will is sisterly :
Dream not, then, I strive to smother
Fires that inly burn for thee.
Rave not, rage not, wrath is fruitless,
Fury cannot change my mind ;
I but deem the feeling rootless
Which so whirls in passion's wind.
Can I love ? Oh, deeply—truly—
Warmly—fondly—but not thee ;
And my love is answered duly,
With an equal energy.

POEMS BY

Wouldst thou see thy rival ? Hasten,
Draw that curtain soft aside,
Look where yon thick branches chasten
Noon, with shades of eventide.
In that glade, where foliage blending
Forms a green arch overhead,
Sits thy rival, thoughtful bending
O'er a stand with papers spread—
Motionless, his fingers plying
That untired, unresting pen ;
Time and tide unnoticed flying,
There he sits—the first of men !
Man of conscience—man of reason ;
Stern, perchance, but ever just ;
Foe to falsehood, wrong, and treason,
Honour's shield, and virtue's trust !
Worker, thinker, firm defender
Of Heaven's truth—man's liberty ;
Soul of iron—proof to slander,
Rock where founders tyranny.
Fame he seeks not—but full surely
She will seek him, in his home ;
This I know, and wait securely
For the atoning hour to come.
To that man my faith is given,
Therefore, soldier, cease to sue ;
While God reigns in earth and Heaven,
I to him will still be true !

XIV

EVENING SOLACE

THE human heart has hidden treasures,
In secret kept, in silence sealed ;—
The thoughts, the hopes, the dreams, the
pleasures,
Whose charms were broken if revealed.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

And days may pass in gay confusion,
And nights in rosy riot fly,
While, lost in Fame's or Wealth's illusion,
The memory of the Past may die.

But there are hours of lonely musing,
Such as in evening silence come,
When, soft as birds their pinions closing,
The heart's best feelings gather home.
Then in our souls there seems to languish
A tender grief that is not woe ;
And thoughts that once wrung groans of
anguish,
Now cause but some mild tears to flow.

And feelings, once as strong as passions,
Float softly back—a faded dream ;
Our own sharp griefs and wild sensations,
The tale of others' sufferings seem.
Oh ! when the heart is freshly bleeding,
How longs it for that time to be,
When, through the mist of years receding,
Its woes live but in reverie !

And it can dwell on moonlight glimmer,
On evening shade and loneliness ;
And, while the sky grows dim and dimmer,
Feel no untold and strange distress—
Only a deeper impulse given
By lonely hour and darkened room,
To solemn thoughts that soar to heaven
Seeking a life and world to come.

The original draft of this poem is entitled 'Remembrance,'
and is marked 'Haworth.'

POEMS BY

XV

STANZAS

IF thou be in a lonely place,
If one hour's calm be thine,
As Evening bends her placid face
O'er this sweet day's decline ;
If all the earth and all the heaven
Now look serene to thee,
As o'er them shuts the summer even,
One moment—think of me !

Pause, in the lane, returning home ;
'Tis dusk, it will be still :
Pause near the elm, a sacred gloom
Its breezeless boughs will fill.
Look at that soft and golden light,
High in the unclouded sky ;
Watch the last bird's belated flight,
As it flits silent by.

Hark ! for a sound upon the wind,
A step, a voice, a sigh ;
If all be still, then yield thy mind,
Unchecked, to memory.
If thy love were like mine, how blest
That twilight hour would seem,
When, back from the regretted Past,
Returned our early dream !

If thy love were like mine, how wild
Thy longings, even to pain,
For sunset soft, and moonlight mild,
To bring that hour again ?
But oft, when in thine arms I lay,
I've seen thy dark eyes shine,
And deeply felt their changeful ray
Spoke other love than mine.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

My love is almost anguish now,
It beats so strong and true ;
'Twere rapture, could I deem that thou
Such anguish ever knew.
I have been but thy transient flower,
Thou wert my god divine ;
Till checked by death's congealing power,
This heart must throb for thine.

And well my dying hour were blest,
If life's expiring breath
Should pass, as thy lips gently prest
My forehead cold in death ;
And sound my sleep would be, and sweet,
Beneath the churchyard tree,
If sometimes in thy heart should beat
One pulse, still true to me.

The MS. of this poem is dated May 14, 1837, and is marked
'Written at Roe Head ; copied at Haworth, Aug. 30th, 1845.'

XVI

PARTING

THERE 's no use in weeping,
Though we are condemned to part ;
There 's such a thing as keeping
A remembrance in one's heart :

There 's such a thing as dwelling
On the thought ourselves have nursed,
And with scorn and courage telling
The world to do its worst.

We 'll not let its follies grieve us,
We 'll just take them as they come ;
And then every day will leave us
A merry laugh for home.

POEMS BY

When we 've left each friend and brother,
When we 're parted, wide and far,
We will think of one another,
As even better than we are.

Every glorious sight above us,
Every pleasant sight beneath,
We 'll connect with those that love us,
Whom we truly love till death !

In the evening, when we 're sitting
By the fire, perchance alone,
Then shall heart with warm heart meeting,
Give responsive tone for tone.

We can burst the bonds which chain us,
Which cold human hands have wrought,
And where none shall dare restrain us
We can meet again, in thought.

So there 's no use in weeping,—
Bear a cheerful spirit still :
Never doubt that Fate is keeping
Future good for present ill !

One MS. of the above poem is dated January 29, 1838 (the last day of the Christmas holidays, which Charlotte Brontë spent at home, before returning to her situation as governess in Miss Wooler's school at Heald's House, Dewsbury Moor, Yorkshire). Another MS. copy of the poem is marked 'Written at Haworth, 1838 ; copied at Bruxelles, 1843.' The poem was set to music by J. E. Field, London, and published in the year 1853.

XVII

APOSTASY

THIS last denial of my faith,
Thou, solemn Priest, hast heard ;
And, though upon my bed of death,
I call not back a word.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Point not to thy Madonna, Priest,—
Thy sightless saint of stone :
She cannot, from this burning breast,
Wring one repentant moan.

Thou say'st that, when a sinless child,
I duly bent the knee,
And prayed to what in marble smiled
Cold, lifeless, mute on me.
I did. But listen ! Children spring
Full soon to riper youth ;
And, for Love's vow and Wedlock's ring,
I sold my early truth.

'Twas not a grey, bare head, like thine,
Bent o'er me, when I said,
' That land and God and Faith are mine,
For which thy fathers bled.'
I see thee not : my eyes are dim ;
But well I hear thee say,
' O daughter, cease to think of him
Who led thy soul astray.

' Between you lies both space and time ;
Let leagues and years prevail
To turn thee from the path of crime,
Back to the Church's pale.'
And did I need that thou shouldst tell
What mighty barriers rise
To part me from that dungeon-cell,
Where my loved Walter lies ?

And did I need that thou shouldst taunt
My dying hour at last,
By bidding this worn spirit pant
No more for what is past ?

POEMS BY

Priest—*must* I cease to think of him ?
How hollow rings that word !
Can time, can tears, can distance dim
The memory of my lord ?

I said before, I saw not thee,
Because, an hour ago,
Over my eyeballs, heavily,
The lids fell down like stone.
But still my spirit's inward sight
Beholds his image beam
As fixed, as clear, as burning bright,
As some red planet's gleam.

Talk not of thy Last Sacrament,
Tell not thy beads for me ;
Both rite and prayer are vainly spent,
As dews upon the sea.
Speak not one word of Heaven above,
Rave not of Hell's alarms ;
Give me but back my Walter's love,
Restore me to his arms !

Then will the bliss of Heaven be won ;
Then will Hell shrink away,
As I have seen night's terrors shun
The conquering steps of day.
'Tis my religion thus to love,
My creed thus fixed to be ;
Not death shall shake, nor Priestcraft break
My rock-like constancy !

Now go ; for at the door there waits
Another stranger guest ;
He calls—I come—my pulse scarce beats,
My heart fails in my breast.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Again that voice—how far away,
How dreary sounds that tone !
And I, methinks, am gone astray,
In trackless wastes and lone.

I fain would rest a little while :
Where can I find a stay,
Till dawn upon the hills shall smile,
And show some trodden way ?
' I come ! I come ! ' in haste she said ;
' 'Twas Walter's voice I heard ! '
Then up she sprang—but fell back dead,
His name her latest word.

A draft of part of the above poem (60 lines) is dated May 29, 1837, and is marked ' Roe Head.'

XVIII

WINTER STORES

WE take from life one little share,
And say that this shall be
A space, redeemed from toil and care,
From tears and sadness free.

And, haply, Death unstrings his bow,
And Sorrow stands apart,
And, for a little while, we know
The sunshine of the heart.

Existence seems a summer eve,
Warm, soft, and full of peace ;
Our free, unfettered feelings give
The soul its full release.

A moment, then, it takes the power
To call up thoughts that throw,
Around that charmed and hallowed hour,
This life's divinest glow.

POEMS BY

But Time, though viewlessly it flies,
And slowly, will not stay ;
Alike, through clear and clouded skies,
It cleaves its silent way.

Alike the bitter cup of grief,
Alike the draught of bliss,
Its progress leaves but moment brief
For baffled lips to kiss.

The sparkling draught is dried away,
The hour of rest is gone,
And urgent voices, round us, say,
' Ho, lingerer, hasten on ! '

And has the soul, then, only gained,
From this brief time of ease,
A moment's rest, when overstrained,
One hurried glimpse of peace ?

No ; while the sun shone kindly o'er us,
And flowers bloomed round our feet,—
While many a bud of joy before us
Unclosed its petals sweet,—

An unseen work within was plying ;
Like honey-seeking bee,
From flower to flower, unwearied, flying,
Laboured one faculty,—

Thoughtful for Winter's future sorrow,
Its gloom and scarcity ;
Prescient to-day of want to-morrow,
Toiled quiet Memory.

'Tis she that from each transient pleasure
Extracts a lasting good ;
'Tis she that finds, in summer, treasure
To serve for winter's food.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

And when Youth's summer day is vanished,
And Age brings Winter's stress,
Her stores, with hoarded sweets replenished,
Life's evening hours will bless.

XIX

THE MISSIONARY

Plough, vessel, plough the British main,
Seek the free ocean's wider plain ;
Leave English scenes and English skies,
Unbind, dissever English ties ;
Bear me to climes remote and strange,
Where altered life, fast-following change,
Hot action, never-ceasing toil,
Shall stir, turn, dig, the spirit's soil ;
Fresh roots shall plant, fresh seed shall sow,
Till a new garden there shall grow,
Cleared of the weeds that fill it now,—
Mere human love, mere selfish yearning,
Which, cherished, would arrest me yet.
I grasp the plough, there 's no returning,
Let me, then, struggle to forget.

But England's shores are yet in view,
And England's skies of tender blue
Are arched above her guardian sea.
I cannot yet Remembrance flee ;
I must again, then, firmly face
That task of anguish to retrace.
Wedded to home—I home forsake ;
Fearful of change—I changes make ;
Too fond of ease—I plunge in toil ;
Lover of calm—I seek turmoil :
Nature and hostile destiny
Stir in my heart a conflict wild ;
And long and fierce the war will be
Ere duty both has reconciled.

POEMS BY

What other tie yet holds me fast
To the divorced, abandoned past ?
Smouldering, on my heart's altar lies
The fire of some great sacrifice,
Not yet half quenched. The sacred steel
But lately struck my carnal will,
My life-long hope, first joy and last,
What I loved well, and clung to fast ;
What I wished wildly to retain,
What I renounced with soul-felt pain ;
What—when I saw it, axe-struck, perish—
Left me no joy on earth to cherish ;
A man bereft—yet sternly now
I do confirm that Jephtha vow :
Shall I retract, or fear, or flee ?
Did Christ, when rose the fatal tree
Before Him, on Mount Calvary ?
'Twas a long fight, hard fought, but won,
And what I did was justly done.

Yet, Helen ! from thy love I turned,
When my heart most for thy heart
burned ;

I dared thy tears, I dared thy scorn—
Easier the death-pang had been borne.
Helen, thou might'st not go with me,
I could not—dared not stay for thee !
I heard afar, in bonds complain
The savage from beyond the main ;
And that wild sound rose o'er the cry
Wrung out by passion's agony ;
And even when, with the bitterest tear

I ever shed, mine eyes were dim,
Still, with the spirit's vision clear,

I saw Hell's empire, vast and grim,
Spread on each Indian river's shore,
Each realm of Asia covering o'er.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

There the weak, trampled by the strong,
Live but to suffer—hopeless die ;
There pagan-priests, whose creed is Wrong,
Extortion, Lust, and Cruelty,
Crush our lost race—and brimming fill
The bitter cup of human ill ;
And I—who have the healing creed,
The faith benign of Mary's Son,
Shall I behold my brother's need,
And selfishly to aid him shun ?
I—who upon my mother's knees,
In childhood, read Christ's written word,
Received His legacy of peace,
His holy rule of action heard ;
I—in whose heart the sacred sense
Of Jesus' love was early felt ;
Of His pure, full benevolence,
His pitying tenderness for guilt ;
His shepherd-care for wandering sheep,
For all weak, sorrowing, trembling things,
His mercy vast, His passion deep
Of anguish for man's sufferings ;
I—schooled from childhood in such lore—
Dared I draw back or hesitate,
When called to heal the sickness sore
Of those far off and desolate ?
Dark, in the realm and shades of Death,
Nations, and tribes, and empires lie,
But even to them the light of Faith
Is breaking on their sombre sky :
And be it mine to bid them raise
Their drooped heads to the kindling
scene,
And know and hail the sunrise blaze
Which heralds Christ the Nazarene.
I know how Hell the veil will spread
Over their brows and filmy eyes,

POEMS BY

And earthward crush the lifted head
That would look up and seek the skies ;
I know what war the fiend will wage
Against that soldier of the Cross,
Who comes to dare his demon rage,
And work his kingdom shame and loss.
Yes, hard and terrible the toil
Of him who steps on foreign soil,
Resolved to plant the gospel vine,
Where tyrants rule and slaves repine ;
Eager to lift Religion's light
Where thickest shades of mental night
Screen the false god and fiendish rite ;
Reckless that missionary blood,
Shed in wild wilderness and wood,
Has left, upon the unblest air,
The man's deep moan—the martyr's prayer.
I know my lot—I only ask
Power to fulfil the glorious task ;
Willing the spirit, may the flesh
Strength for the day receive afresh,
May burning sun or deadly wind
Prevail not o'er an earnest mind ;
May torments strange or direst death
Nor trample truth, nor baffle faith.
Though such blood-drops should fall from me
As fell in old Gethsemane,
Welcome the anguish, so it gave
More strength to work—more skill to save.
And, oh ! if brief must be my time,
If hostile hand or fatal clime
Cut short my course—still o'er my grave,
Lord, may Thy harvest whitening wave.
So I the culture may begin,
Let others thrust the sickle in ;
If but the seed will faster grow,
May my blood water what I sow !

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

What ! have I ever trembling stood,
And feared to give to God that blood ?
What ! has the coward love of life
Made me shrink from the righteous strife ?
Have human passions, human fears
Severed me from those Pioneers
Whose task is to march first, and trace
Paths for the progress of our race ?
It has been so ; but grant me, Lord,
Now to stand steadfast by Thy word !
Protected by salvation's helm,
Shielded by faith, with truth begirt,
To smile when trials seek to whelm
And stand 'mid testing fires unhurt
Hurling Hell's strongest bulwarks down,
Even when the last pang thrills my breast,
When death bestows the martyr's crown,
And calls me into Jesus' rest.
Then for my ultimate reward—
Then for the world-rejoicing word—
The voice from Father—Spirit—Son :
' Servant of God, well hast thou done ! '

XX

THE ORPHAN CHILD

My feet they are sore, and my limbs they are
weary ;
Long is the way, and the mountains are wild ;
Soon will the twilight close moonless and dreary
Over the path of the poor orphan child.
Why did they send me so far and so lonely,
Up where the moors spread and grey rocks are
piled ?
Men are hard-hearted, and kind angels only
Watch o'er the steps of a poor orphan child.

POEMS BY

Yet distant and soft the night-breeze is blowing,
Clouds there are none, and clear stars beam
mild ;

God, in His mercy, protection is showing,
Comfort and hope to the poor orphan child.

Even should I fall o'er the broken bridge passing,
Or stray in the marshes, by false lights beguiled,
Still will my Father, with promise and blessing,
Take to His bosom the poor orphan child.

There is a thought that for strength should avail
me,
Though both of shelter and kindred despoiled ;
Heaven is a home, and a rest will not fail me ;
God is a friend to the poor orphan child.

XXI

ROCHESTER'S SONG TO JANE EYRE

THE truest love that ever heart
Felt at its kindled core
Did through each vein, in quickened start,
The tide of being pour.

Her coming was my hope each day,
Her parting was my pain ;
The chance that did her steps delay
Was ice in every vein.

I dreamed it would be nameless bliss,
As I loved, loved to be ;
And to this object did I press
As blind as eagerly.

But wide as pathless was the space
That lay our lives between,
And dangerous as the foamy race
Of ocean-surges green.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

And haunted as a robber-path
Through wilderness or wood ;
For Right and Might, and Woe and Wrath,
Between our spirits stood.

I dangers dared ; I hindrance scorned ;
I omens did defy :
Whatever menaced, harassed, warned,
I passed impetuous by.

On sped my rainbow, fast as light ;
I flew as in a dream ;
For glorious rose upon my sight
The child of Shower and Gleam.

Still bright on clouds of suffering dim
Shines that soft, solemn joy ;
Nor care I now, how dense and grim
Disasters gather nigh.

I care not in this moment sweet,
Though all I have rushed o'er
Should come on pinion, strong and fleet,
Proclaiming vengeance sore :

Though haughty Hate should strike me down,
Right, bar approach to me,
And grinding Might, with furious frown,
Swear endless enmity.

My love has placed her little hand
With noble faith in mine,
And vowed that wedlock's sacred band
Our nature shall entwine.

My love has sworn, with sealing kiss,
With me to live—to die ;
I have at last my nameless bliss :
As I love—loved am I !

POEMS BY

XXII

THE ORPHANS

(Translated from the French of Louis Belmontet.)

'Twas New Year's night ; the joyous throng
Of guests from banquet rose,
And lightly took their homeward path
Across the drifted snows.
That night, e'en to the peasants' shed,
Some little gleam of gladness spread.

That night, beside a chapel door,
Two lonely children stood ;
In timid tone, with utterance faint,
They asked a little food :
Careless, the laughing guests passed by,
Too gay to mark the Orphans' cry.

A lamp that lit the sacred shrine
The children's pale cheeks showed ;
The elder stretched his trembling hand
For what was not bestowed ;
The younger sang a plaintive strain,
Oft dropped, then feebly raised again.

' Two friendless, helpless children, we,
Our mother's death we weep ;
Together in one narrow grave,
She and our father sleep !
We too of cold and want must die,
If none will help or hear our cry ! '

This voice was lost ; the winter-wind
Bore off its tones subdued,
And soon the merry feasters gone,
Left all in solitude ;
And none had looked towards the church
Or marked the Orphans in its porch.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Then turned they to the chapel door ;
Their mother oft had said
That God will shield the friendless poor,
When other aid is fled.
They knocked—an echo mocked the ear ;
They waited—Death alone drew near !

Time speeds ; the lamp shines feebly
still,
The chimes of midnight sound ;
Heard now from far, a chariot's wheels
Ring o'er the frozen ground.
Rise, Orphans ! Call ! No !—hushed their
cry.
Unchecked, the chariot thunders by.

A priest his matins came to say,
When dawn first lit the skies ;
He found them on the threshold laid ;
He called—they would not rise !
The icy steps of stone their bed,
The white snow for their covering spread.

Clasped closely in each other's arms
As if for warmth, they lay ;
But perished is the fire of Life,
And stilled the pulses' play ;
Mute, motionless, and ashen pale,
They slept, no more to wake or wail !

The elder pressed the younger's lips,
As if to check a prayer ;
As if to say, ' 'Tis vain to ask !
Compassion dwells not here ! '
And half he screened his brother's form
To hide him from the frozen storm.

POEMS BY C. BRONTË

Lulled thus in everlasting sleep,
The Orphan Babes are laid ;
Now those their piteous fate may weep
Who would not give them aid ;
Crowds thronged the church by morning light,
But none came near that winter-night !

The original MS. of the above translation is dated February 1843. It was printed in *The Manchester Athenæum Album*, 1850, with the exception of the first stanza, which is as follows :

The summer days are passed away,
The fields are frozen o'er ;
Now, reft of hope and far from aid,
Woe to the houseless poor :
By cold hearts spurned, how hard their fate
To die unpitied, desolate !

THE POSTHUMOUS POEMS OF CHARLOTTE BRONTË

(Poems marked with an asterisk (*) are now published
for the first time.)

1

DATED POEMS ARRANGED IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER

XXIII *

THE SONG OF THE FAIRIES

IN this fairy land of light
No mortals e'er have been ;
And the dreadful grandeur of this sight
By them hath not been seen.
It would strike them shuddering to the earth
Like the flash from a thunder-cloud ;
It would quench their light and joyous mirth,
And fit them for the shroud.
The rising of our palaces,
Like visions of the deep,
And the glory of their structure,
No mortal voice can speak.

Chorus :

The music of our songs,
And our mighty trumpet's swell,
And the sounding of our silver harps,
No mortal tongue can tell.

Of us they know but little,
Save when the storm doth rise,
And the mighty waves are tossing
Against the archèd skies.

POEMS BY

Then oft they see us striding
O'er the billows' snow-white foam,
Or hear us speak in thunder
When we stand in grandeur lone
On the darkest of the mighty clouds
Which veil the pearly moon,
Around us lightning flashing,
Night's blackness to illume.

Chorus :

The music of our songs,
And our mighty trumpet's swell,
And the sounding of our silver harps,
No mortal tongue can tell.

From Chapter iv. of 'The Search after Happiness,' an unpublished story commenced on July 28, 1829, and finished on August 17, 1829, when Charlotte Brontë was thirteen years of age. 'The Song of the Fairies' is her earliest known composition in verse. It is introduced with the words: 'In this palace were thousands and tens of thousands of fairies and genii, some of whom flitted lightly among the blazing lamps to the sound of unearthly music, which died and swelled in a stream of wild grandeur suited to the words they sang.'

XXIV *

SUNSET

BENEATH a shady tree I sat
Through which, with wondrous lustre, gleamed
The rays of the departing sun
Which, in its golden glory, beamed
Among the shady verdant boughs,
Tinging with crimson light
The beauteous emerald foliage
Now like a ruby bright.

All still and peaceful was the scene,
And silence reigned around,

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Save the music of a murmuring stream
Which, with its gentle sound,

Filled the shady valley where I sat
With a low melodious tone,
In concert with the nightingale,
And zephyr's gentle moan.

At length the robe of twilight spread
O'er all the darkening earth,
And still and peaceful were the sounds
Of sorrow and of mirth ;

And silently the little stars
Looked from the azure sky,
While Orion's golden belt
Shone gloriously on high.

C. B. *October 8, 1829.*

XXV *

SUNRISE

BEHOLD that silvery streak of light
Circling the heavens gray,
Encroaching on the reign of night
And heralding the day.

Now of a richer, deeper tint
The sunny glory grows,
Until a stream of heavenly light
Along the horizon flows.

Rising it melts into the pale
Soft azure of the sky :
How beautiful, how glowing bright,
Is its ethereal dye !

Hung in the sapphire arch of heaven,
Above this golden light,
The silver crescent of the moon
Seems to the wondering sight

POEMS BY

A world in which fair spirits dwell,
So pure and fair it beams,
So gentle is the pearly light
That softly from it streams.

But rises now the glorious sun
Casting the clouds aside,
And in his burning chariot forth
Triumphantly doth ride ;

And at his blazing presence bright
All nature doth rejoice :
Earth, sky, and sea join in his praise
With one united voice.

Sweetly the little birds do sing,
Warbling their notes in air,
While flowerets in their tiny cups
Bright gem-like dewdrops bear.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË. *October 9, 1829.*

A facsimile of the original manuscript of the two poems 'Sunset' and 'Sunrise' is given as a frontispiece in a small volume entitled *Poems by Charlotte, Emily, and Anne Brontë*, which was issued for private circulation only, in an edition limited to one hundred and ten copies, by Dodd, Mead and Company, New York, in the year 1902. The MS. contains several pen and ink sketches by Charlotte Brontë, including portraits of herself, and 'Young Soult,' i.e. her brother, Patrick Branwell Brontë.

XXVI

THE CHURCHYARD

ONE night, when silence reigned around,
I heard sweet music rise,
Whose harp-like and harmonious sound
Came from the star-decked ¹ skies ;

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

And, when had died each silver ² tone,
Thy spirit passed away,
And left me a sad mourner lone
On this dark earth to stay.

My sister, ³ may it ever be
That from thy home on high
A hymn of peace may check in me
Each dark rebellious sigh ;

Then, sister, shall I truly know
That mansions of the blest
Wait, till from weariness below
My spirit enters rest !

CHARLOTTE BRONTË. *December 24, 1829.*

¹ star-hung, ² soft sweet, are variations in one MS. which contains four additional stanzas and thirty-four lines of blank verse.

³ Maria Brontë, the eldest sister of Charlotte Brontë, and the prototype of 'Helen Burns' in *Jane Eyre*, died on May 6, 1825, at the age of eleven years.

XXVII *

WRITTEN UPON THE OCCASION OF THE
DINNER GIVEN TO THE LITERATI OF THE
GLASS-TOWN, which was attended by all the
Great Men of the present time : Soldier, Sailor,
Poet and Painter, Architect, Politician, Novelist,
and Romancer.

THE splendid Hall is blazing with many a glow-
ing light,
And a spirit-like effulgence mild, a flood of glory
bright,
Flows round the stately pillars, nor dimly dies
away
In the arched roof of solid stone, but there each
golden ray

POEMS BY

Shines with a brightened splendour, a radiance
rich and fair,
And then falls amid the palace vast, and lightens
up the air,
Till the atmosphere around is one continuous flow
Of streaming lustre, brilliant light, and liquid
topaz glow.
All beneath this gorgeousness there sits a chosen
band
Of genius high and courage bold : the noblest of
the land.
The feast is spread, and brightly the purple juice
doth shine
In the yellow gold magnificent : the sparkling
generous wine !
And all between the thunders of patriotic cheers
Is heard the sounding orchestra, while the in-
spiring tears
Of a rich southern vineyard are quaffed to wish
the health
Of some most noble warrior fierce, a nation's
power and wealth.
And then arises slowly an orator of might
And pours a flood of eloquence upon this festal
night.
The gentle stream flows dimpling 'mong rhetoric's
bright flowers,
Poises in wild sublimity on eagle's wing-high
towers ;
And lost amid the cloudy curtains of his might,
Far beyond the common ken his spirit has taken
flight.
For awhile he dwells in glory within the solemn veil,
Then returns upon the smoother seas of beauty
fair to sail.
The scene this night is joyous within these palace
walls,

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

But ere ten passing centuries are gone these lofty
halls
May stand in darksome ruin : these stately
pillars high
May echo back far other sounds than those which
sweetly fly
Among their light bold arches, and mingling
softly rise
In a wild enchanting melody, which tremulously
dies ;
The yell of the hyena, the bloody-tiger's howl,
May be heard in this magnificence, mixed with
the lion's growl ;
While in the cold pale moonlight may stand the
ruins grey,
These marble columns mouldering, and gladness
fled away !

C. BRONTË. *January 9, 1830.*

Many other doggerel lines are to be found among the very early MSS. of Charlotte Brontë and her brother. Most of them appear in the First Series of the *Young Men's Magazine*, comprising six small booklets of prose and verse written in the year 1829. Many of the verses are signed with the initials ' U. T. ' (Us Two), or ' W. T. ' (We Two), indicating that they are the joint productions of the two young authors. The contents of the first of two ' Magazines ' for December 1829, including verses signed as above described, were printed in Part xxix. of the Brontë Society Publications, 1919.

XXVIII *

WRITTEN ON THE SUMMIT OF A HIGH
MOUNTAIN IN THE NORTH OF ENGLAND

How lonely is this spot ! Deep silence reigns ;
For ceased has every human stir and sound ;
But Nature's voice is heard in gentle strains
Which with a stilly noise float softly round.

POEMS BY

Each leaf which quivers in those giant elms
Falls audibly upon the listening ear
As if it came from distant spirit realms,
A warning of some death or danger near.

And now strange thoughts and mournful slowly
rise

Each after other in a gloomy train ;
Each quickly born, and each as quickly dies,
Drunk by the whirlpool of oblivion's main.

But sudden, bursting from a thick, dark cloud,
Lo ! the bright sun illumines all the earth,
Tinting with amber light that watery shroud,
Radiant with beauty as he now walks forth.

Behold, the valley glows with life and light :
Each rain-drop bears a glory in its cell
Of sapphire, ruby, or fair emerald bright,
Rejoicing in its palace clear to dwell.

A wilderness of sweets yon wood appears ;
Before, a forest full of darksome gloom ;
But now a smiling face of joy it wears :
Not such as would befit the churchyard's tomb.

But, all unseemly 'mid the gladness, stands
That ancient castle, mossed and grey with age ;
Once the resort of war-like, feudal bands,
Where oft was heard the battle's bloody rage.

Now an unbroken stillness reigns around :
No warrior's step rings through the archèd
halls ;
No hunting horn's sweet, thrilling, mellow
sound,
Or blood-hounds' yell, reverberates 'mid those
walls.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

The gladsome sunshine suits not with this place :
The golden light seems but to mock the grey
And sorrowing aspect of its furrowed face,
Too time-worn to be joyous with the day.

But when black night o'ershadows with her wing
The prospect, and the solemn nightingale
Sings, while the moon her silver light doth fling
In tremulous lustre o'er the sleeping vale,

Then awfully that ancient castle towers
From out its grave of venerable trees,
Amid whose scathed and withered, leafless bowers
Howls mournfully the piercing winter breeze ;

Or on some day when dark and sombre clouds
Veil dismally the blue ethereal sky,
When the deep grandeur of their blackness shrouds
The sun with all its majesty on high ;

When fitful shadows hurry o'er the plain
And curtain round this mountain's hoary brow,
Rolling voluminous, a misty train,
Or curled in floating vapours, e'en as now,

Those light soft clouds piled in the ambient air,
Of gentle lustre and of pearly hue,
Calm in the summer twilight, mild and fair,
Distilling from their pureness crystal dew.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË. *January 14, 1830.*

XXIX *

A WRETCH IN PRISON

By MURRY

OH, for the song of the gladsome lark,
For the morning sun's fair beam,
Instead of this dungeon, deeply dark,
Where ne'er its light doth gleam !

POEMS BY

Oh, for the breath of the fragrant vale,
For the woodland's bracing breeze,
Blowing like Araby's spicy gale
Amid the forest trees !

Oh, for the light, elastic spring,
For the swift, unwearied step,
When the sound of the horn makes the high hills ring
And the bounding hunter leap !

Oh, for the noise of Freedom's voice
Heard in the hunter's cry,
When the deer has fled like an arrow sped,
Or a lightning flash on high !

Oh, for the rush, for the bold free rush
Of the mighty mountain breeze
Down the rocks away to the dashing spray
Of the roaring, rolling seas !

Oh, for the light most fierce and bright
Of the heavens' cloudy gloom !
Oh, for the sound like an earthquake bound
Of the thunder's hollow boom !

Oh, that the glad stars through my dungeon-bars
Would shed their lustre clear ;
That the solemn moon would lighten the gloom
Which reigns in silence here !

Oh, for some fair light to illumine the night
With a swift and silver glance,
Through these gates to play with a pearly ray,
And lightly here to dance !

C. BRONTË. *February 1, 1830.*

The prisoner Murry was one of the members of the Duke of Wellington's staff in the first story by Charlotte Brontë, *The Twelve Adventurers* ; but the cause of his imprisonment is not given in any of the stories.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

XXX

HOME-SICKNESS

OF College I am tired ; I wish to be at home,
Far from the pompous tutor's voice, and the
hated school-boy's groan.

I wish that I had freedom to walk about at will ;
That I no more was troubled with my Greek and
slate and quill.

I wish to see my kitten, to hear my ape rejoice,
To listen to my nightingale's or parrot's lovely
voice.

And England does not suit me : it's cold and full
of snow ;
So different from black Africa's warm, sunny,
genial glow.

I'm shivering in the day-time, and shivering all
the night :
I'm called poor, startled, withered wretch, and
miserable wight !

And, oh ! I miss my brother, I miss his gentle
smile
Which used so many long dark hours of sorrow
to beguile.

I miss my dearest mother ; I now no longer find
Aught half so mild as she was,—so careful and
so kind.

Oh, I have not my father's, my noble father's
arms
To guard me from all wickedness, and keep me
safe from harms.

POEMS. BY

I hear his voice no longer ; I see no more his eye
Smile on me in my misery : to whom now shall
I fly ?

C. B. C. W. *February, 1830.*

The initials 'C. W.' stand for Charles Wellesley, the supposed school-boy author of the poem, whose home is in West Africa. In a short unpublished story by Charlotte Brontë, dated January 16, 1830, there is the following reference to the boy : 'He was reclining under the shadow of an immense chestnut tree, playing upon a small Spanish guitar, and with a nightingale perched upon his shoulder. A beautiful grey monkey, a small silky spaniel, and a young kitten, bounded and danced before him in the brilliant light of the uprisen moon.'

XXXI *

THE VISION

THE gentle showery Spring had passed away,
And no more breathed the fragrant air of June ;
Summer had clad in glorious array
Each hill and plain ; and now the harvest-
moon
Shone on the waving corn,—brown Autumn's
golden boon !

In that glad time, as twilight softly crept
Over the earth, I wandered to a place
Where stillness reigned as if the whole world
slept,—
For there of noise remained no wearying trace :
But deepest silence sat on Nature's face.

It was a wild glen ; near it frowned huge rocks
Which hung their dark beams o'er its stony bed ;
And, in their caverned sides, faint echo mocks
When rolls some fragment down, with rumbling
dread
And horrid noise, launched from the mountain's
head.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

The valley now was still ; a midnight calm
Fell on it as I sat beneath a tree
Whose leaflets glistened with the dew's mild balm
Wept by the evening gale so freshly free,
And filling all the air with soft humidity.

'Mong the huge trees which canopied that glen
I saw the sky with many a bright star hung,
And through the midst alone sailed (glorious
gem)
The moon, who still her trembling lustre flung
Unchanged, as when the spheres together tune-
ful rung.

At intervals her light fell through the trees
And with mild glory silvered all the vale,
While through those branches whispered not a
breeze :
No hollow blast did sad and mournful wail,
But solemn silence walked beneath the moon-
beams pale.

Yet black the gaunt rocks rose before my eyes,
And their black caverns filled my heart with
dread ;
They stood in grand relief from out the skies
Whose clear vaults archèd o'er each shaggy
head,
And from whose quivering stars a radiant light
was shed.

I gazed upon this scene till slumber fell
Upon my eyelids ; then methought I saw
On my entrancèd sight a vision swell
Whose glory passed the bounds of Nature's
law,
And filled the spirit with a mingled joy and
awe !

POEMS BY

A land was spread before me where the trees
Formed woods of emerald clearness, and high
bowers
Through which there whispered many a murmur-
ing breeze
Perfumed with incense of a hundred flowers,
Watered by clouds of light that fell in fragrant
showers.

I heard sweet voices, not like human sound,
But tuneful of articulate harmony ;
I saw no shape, but oft there floated round
A zephyr soft, and breathing from the sky,
As if some unseen form in light wings flitted by !

At length the air 'gan brighten ; faint there shone
A rainbow path through all the expanse of blue,
And music of a soft melodious tone,
Subdued by distance, through heaven's wide
arch flew,
Falling upon the ear, calm as the twilight dew.

Louder it rose : sweet harp and timbrel clear
Rang tunefully to many a sweeter voice ;
These mingling fell upon the listening ear
While all the echoes answered to the noise,
And Nature seemed united to rejoice !

Then a bright chariot glided through the air
Attended by a glorious company
Of beings radiant surpassing fair ;
Around them rolled of light a mighty sea ;
And now the music played with loudest melody.

And while this scene slow passed before my eyes,
Dazzled with splendour, suddenly I woke,
And, lo ! the light dawn tinged the eastern skies,
Showing the rugged front of many a rock,
And faintly gilding each wide-branching oak.

C. BRONTË. *April 13, 1830.*

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

XXXII

EVENING SONG

PROUDLY the sun has sunk to rest
Behind yon dim and distant hill ;
The busy noise of day has ceased,
A holy calm the air doth fill.

That softening haze which veils the light
Of sunset in the gorgeous sky
Is dusk, grey harbinger of night
Now gliding onward silently.

No sound rings through the solemn vale
Save murmurs of those tall dark trees,
Which raise eternally their wail
Bending beneath the twilight breeze.

And my harp peals the woods among
When vesper lifts its quiet eye,
Commingling with each night-bird's song
That chants its vigils pensively.

And here I sit, until night's noon
Hath gemmed the heavens with many a star,
And sing beneath the wandering moon
Who comes, high journeying, from afar.

Oh ! sweet to me is that still hour
When frown the shades of night around,
Deepening the gloom of forest-bower ;
Filling the air with awe profound.

I hush my harp, and hush my song ;
Low kneeling 'neath the lofty sky
I hark the nightingale prolong
Her strain of wondrous melody,

POEMS BY

Forth gushing like a mountain rill,—
So rich, so deep, so clear and free,—
She pours it forth o'er vale and hill,
O'er rock and river, lake and tree,

Till morn comes, and, with rosy hand,
Unbars the golden gates of day ;
Then, as at touch of magic wand,
The earth is clad in fair array.

Then from its couch the skylark springs :
The trembling drops of glittering dew
Are scattered, as with vigorous wings
It mounts the glorious arch of blue.

This is the harper's song from the story entitled *The Adventures of Ernest Alembert*, which was completed by Charlotte Brontë on May 25, 1830. The story was first printed in 1896, in an edition limited to thirty copies for private circulation only. It was edited by Mr. T. J. Wise, who included in the little volume facsimiles of two pages of the original MS., including the page containing the poem.

XXXIII *

REFLECTIONS

Now sweetly shines the golden sun,
The howling wind is still ;
The glorious light of day is flung
O'er every vale and hill.

On yonder bank myself I'll rest,
A blue stream wanders by
In whose smooth, wavy, liquid breast
Inverted glows the sky.

The sweet, wild flowers are loosely cast
In wreaths and clusters round ;
I'll watch the waves meandering past,
To far-off regions bound.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

I'll gaze upon the world below :
The clear translucent sky,
The shrubs and trees that downward grow,
The swift clouds sailing by.

Each shines with dim and watery gleam ;
A pale and gentle light
Encircles them with solemn beam,
Like glory of the night.

The willow waving o'er my head
Waves also 'neath my feet ;
Reflected in the river's bed
The heavens and branches meet.

Lone drooping to the azure deep
They seem to touch the cloud,
And there unmoved they calmly sleep,
Not e'en by zephyrs bowed.

C. BRONTË. *May 31, 1830.*

XXXIV *

THE EVENING WALK

A POEM BY

THE MARQUIS OF DOURO

In Pindaric Metre

PUBLISHED

AND SOLD

BY

CAPTAIN TREE

AND ALL OTHER BOOK-SELLERS IN THE CHIEF
GLASS-TOWN, WELLINGTON'S GLASS-TOWN, PARIS,
PARRY'S GLASS-TOWN, ROSS'S GLASS-TOWN, ETC., ETC.

POEMS BY

PREFACE

The following pages are the production of my pen, not, according to a much-used scrap of cut and dried phraseology, the emanations of leisure hours, but the fruit of some days' labour. I shall not introduce them to my readers by a servile appeal to their indulgence and compassion, but, having cast them unprotected on the world, I leave them entirely at the Public's mercy to praise or condemn them as she pleases.

DOURO. *June 28, 1830.*

CHARLOTTE BRONTË.

The original manuscript of *The Evening Walk* is in the form of a very small book, with title-page and preface as above, and written in minute characters resembling the smallest of printed type.

The pseudonym of 'Douro' or 'Marquis of Douro,' first used with this poem, is appended to most of the ensuing poems written by Charlotte Brontë during the year 1830, but is usually followed by her own signature.

The 'Marquis of Douro' was the principal hero of her prose stories at that time, and his abilities as a poet are enlarged on in the story entitled *Albion and Marina*.

THE EVENING WALK

WHEN August glowed with all a summer's pride,
And noon had glided into eventide,
A fresh breeze, through my unclosed lattice
 playing,
Amid a vine's young wandering tendrils straying,
Asked me with voice more sweet than harp or lute
Or merry dulcimer or gentle flute
To walk abroad and taste the balmy air,
Which violets of the vale, and lilies fair,
Had filled with fragrance as it o'er them breathed;
Upon the green grass, in rich clusters wreathed,

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

They lay. When the wind passed, each raised its
head,
And odorous perfumes softly round me shed,
Pouring delights upon the sweeping vale
Ere twilight came their beauties bright to veil,
Their loveliness in sheltering leaves to fold,
While clouds of night high o'er the skies are
rolled,
And shadows blacken meadow, plain, and wold.

Not unheeded spoke the wind
Murmuring in my ear ;
Soon I saw afar behind
The thunderous city¹ peer

Above its girdling green-robed hills,
Above its forests wild and high,
And the Tower,² which with wonder fills
Each stranger, clave the sky.

No mist slept on its head,
No clouds begirt it round,
And the majesty about it
With awe my spirit bound.

Then I turned away oppressed
Towards the glories of the west :
I could gaze for aye
On the proud array
Of the sunset heavens at the close of day ;

At the radiant dyes
Which paint the skies
When Apollo to his haven hies,
And bathed in seas of golden light,
Diving, he leaves the world to-night.

¹ Verreopolis (Glass-town) or Verdopolis.

² The Tower of all the Nations.

POEMS · BY

There the rose's crimson blends
With purple bright, that soft ascends
To the stainless blue
Whose heavenly hue
Robes the vault which distils translucent dew
On the thirsty earth,
Giving joyous birth
To signs of vegetable worth.
And while each clear drop is lit with glory,
The pearly plains look dim and hoary.

On splendours of the gorgeous west
At length I ceased to gaze :
My dazzled eyes sought in the east
The soft restoring haze
That dusky, dim-clad twilight brings
Ever on its silent wings ;

There a belt of palest red
All the horizon circlèd ;
Dimly did it wane and fade
With indistinctly melting shade
Into the cerulean sky
As it calmly rose on high,
Rivalling the rainbow's hue
When it blended with the blue.

Eastward I took my lonely way,
Attracted by that aspect mild ;
And as the last transcendent ray
Of sun o'er verdant nature smiled,
I came to a pile of high, gaunt rocks,
Whose giant plumes were the shaggy oaks
Now grimly waving ;
And a mighty stream went howling by,
Whose voice arose to the lofty sky,
As wildly raving

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

It chafed its bounds of solid stone ;
And the desert rang with the ceaseless moan,
While the caverned rocks sent back the sound
Which through all that region echoed round.

Awhile by that impetuous flood,
Wrapped in thought, I silent stood ;
Till splashed with spray
I turned away,
Aided by the sinking day.

Emerging from that chasm wild,
Where in solitude the rocks were piled,
I entered a grassy plain,
Embosomed in mountains towering aloft :
It smiled with a garb of green herbage soft,
Like the emerald-circlets which fairies trace
When the morrice-dance they merrily pace.

An enormous gloom was round it cast
By a frowning forest of pine-wood vast
Which stretched o'er every mountain grey.
Densely it grew the hills along,
And even in meridian day
Night reigned those hills among.

For black is there the shade
By nodding branches made ;
And in the solemn twilight murk
A hundred noisome reptiles lurk ;
The matted grass or bushy brake
Conceals the slyly creeping snake ;
While hemlock rears its baleful head
Where thickest is the darkness shed.

But no loathsome creatures crept
Through that flowery plain :
There 'mid sweets the skylark slept
Chanting, in dreams, the strain

POEMS . BY

Which soon the morning skies shall thrill,
The air of dawn with music fill,
 When on its spotted breast
The first light gleams, amid some cloud,
While far below, in misty shroud,
 The Earth is laid at rest.

Now above the horizon bar
 The quiet moon rose o'er the world ;
Night's banner, decked with many a star,
 Was silently unfurled.

In one continuous sheet of light
 And yellow lustre swathed,
Meek nature lay, and faintly bright
 Her hills and trees were bathed

 With floods of glory
 Gushing from on high,
On rocks all hoary
 By splendour of the sky.

The plain I wandered o'er,
 Uncertain where to go,
Until I heard before
 A warbling streamlet flow.

Soon I had crossed the narrow brook,
And my onward way I took
Till I reached a haunted dell ;
Down the green sides sloping fell ;
'Broidering moss spread o'er each bank
On which my footsteps softly sank,
Purple violets frequent peeped
From where, with closed buds, they slept
 Nestling in the leaves !

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Coming night had deepened round
On the solitary ground,
And the bottom of the dell,
As it far-receding fell
From the fair moon's silver-light
Which pierced the gathering gloom of night,
Indistinct and dark, appeared
Covered with a dusky veil,
Through which some fair object peered,
Star-illumined, faint and pale !

From the gloom methought I heard
Music sweet ascend ;
Like the voice of singing-bird
Sweetly did it blend ;

Strain of thrush and nightingale
In one superhuman song ;
Pensive as a wind-harp's wail
It poured the air along.

Fairies were in the hollow green,
Feasting amid wild flowers,
And the harmony came forth unseen
Passing in joy the hours.

I knew the trip of their little feet
By the rustling grass below,
As o'er it they flew, elastic, fleet,
Where it waved in that region low.

I heard the song of the Elves arise,
And oh ! 'twas sweetly flung
On the breeze, as it mingled with those sighs ;
Thus, the tiny spirits sung :—

POEMS BY

THE SONG OF THE ELVES

*Come, fill with sparkling dew
Each gold and crystal cup ;
Let the clarion and the horn
Full joyously resound.
Lo ! the lamps of eve are twinkling,
And the stars of night are up,
And the music of the nightingale
Is gushing all around.*

*The flowers close their leaflets
And listen to the tone
Dull howling through those ancient trees :
'Tis the hoarse, wild-wind's moan.*

*That blast has broken from its hold
With might of thunderous roar,
O'er the trembling vault of heaven rolled,
O'er the mountain summits hoar.*

*Hark ! how it rushes
And furiously gushes
Adown that narrow vale !
The stern oaks bend,
Their strong roots rend
'Neath that triumphant gale.*

*Now, fierce tumult cease !
Loud wind, rest in peace !
Restrain thy wearying
Tumultuous breath ;
And let a silence come
Frozen and fast as death !*

*Now stopped the merry dancing :
I heard it no more ;
Yet, by light moonbeams glancing,
I saw the fairies soar*

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

On swift and noiseless silken wing,
The calm air gently winnowing ;
 They swiftly rose on high,
 Then slowly disappeared
And melted in the sky.

Now the hush of moonlight lay
On all the hills around :
No murmuring sound of day
Pierced the still night profound.

I yet walked on unheeding
Over the lonely plain,
The stars of heaven reading,
Like a wanderer on the main ;

When sudden the sound of a current fell,
Loud rushing, on my ear ; -
And I saw through trees the cataract well
That roared impetuous near.

Strangely that ceaseless thunder woke
Those vast and solitary woods :
Silence dead, that eloquent spoke !
It ever rolled its floods.

¹ *Eagles that shoot on wings athwart the sky,
Or soar, sublimely wrapped in solemn cloud ;
That build their inaccessible nests on high
'Mid oaks, whose gnarlèd trunks in homage
bowed,—
Conceal themselves, and in their leafy shroud*

*Sleep sometimes ; and the lion doth also rest
In forest den, crouching till close of day,—
Till the sun, sinking in the crimson west,
Shall call him forth again to hunt for prey,
And for his royal food the subject beasts to slay.*

¹ The lines printed in italics appear in the original manuscript in the same position.

POEMS . BY

*Huge Behemoth ! shakes not for aye the ground :
At night he lays his vast bulk under trees
Whose thick leaves lull him to repose, with sound
Of hoarsely murmuring waters of the seas,
Where swell the azure waves, unswept by wind or
breeze.*

But running brook and river
Still rush along their way ;
They stop their courses never
By midnight or noon-day.
Though stars to soothe their raving
May sweetly o'er them play,
Yet still their green banks laving
They hold the channel'd way ;
Through quiet moonlight's streaming,
Unmindful that still ray ;
Through emerald foliage gleaming
They churn the silver spray.

How weary seems that lasting task,
Still in motion on to pour !
Ne'er in fixèd calm to bask
Like mirror by the sounding shore.

Then the trees might droop unshaken
Round the quiet bay ;
And the silence then might waken
Birds to chant their lay :

Inarticulate anthems hymning,
Perched on slender twig and bough,
Their music o'er the surface skimming
While the stream rests from its flow ;
And no longer past meandering
Doth eternal go !

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

When again the river glides,
From binding chains set free,
Each majestic wavelet rides
Laden with melody,
Bearing its tribute waters
Towards the boundless sea ;
Then in awful billows heaving
With its own loud harmony.

These were my thoughts as home my steps I
turned.

By clouds, which sailed along the horizon, warned,
I cast one last glance at the lonely moon
To see if yet, in the wide heavens, she shone.
Lo ! curtaining mists o'er all the sky were spread,
And, weary with nightly watching, she 'd veiled
her beauteous head !

MARQUIS OF DOURO.

C. BRONTË. *June 28, 1830.*

XXXV *

MORNING

Lo ! the light of the morning is flowing
Through radiant portals of gold,
Which Aurora, in crimson robes glowing,
For the horses of fire doth unfold.

See Apollo's burnished car
Glorifies the East afar.
As it draws the horizon nigher,
As it climbs the heavens higher,
Richer grows the amber light,
Fairer, more intensely bright,
Till floods of light in splendour roll
O'er all the earth from pole to pole.

POEMS · BY

Hark ! the birds in the green forest bowers
Have beheld the sun's Chariot arise ;
And the humblest, the stateliest flowers
Are arrayed in more beautiful dyes.

Now, while the woodland choirs are singing,
Opening buds fresh odours flinging ;
And while Nature's tuneful voice
Calls on all men to rejoice,
I cannot join the common gladness :
'Tis to me a time of sadness :
All these sounds of mirth impart
Nought but sorrow to my heart.

But I love evening's still, quiet hour,
The whispering twilight breeze,
The damp dew's invisible shower
Conglobing in drops on the trees.

Then is heard no sound or tone
But the night-bird singing lone ;
Peacefully adown the vale
It passes on the balmy gale ;
Ceases oft the pensive strain,
Solemn sinking, and again
Philomela sends her song
To wander the night-winds along.

While silver-robed Luna is beaming
Afar in the heavens on high,
And her bright train of planets are gleaming
Like gems in the dome of the sky.

From the firmament above
Down they gaze with looks of love
On the minstrel, all unheeding,
Still their ears entrancèd feeding
With the notes of sweetest sound
Gushing forth on all around :

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Music not unfit for Heaven
But to earth in mercy given ;
Thou dost charm the mourner's heart,
Thou dost pensive joy impart :
Peerless Queen of Harmony,
How I love thy melody !

MARQUIS OF DOURO. *August 22, 1830.*

The above poem is included in the October 1830 number of the Second Series of the *Young Men's Magazine*, comprising six small MS. books, measuring about 2 inches by 1½ inches, prose and verse, written in minute characters resembling the smallest of printed type. The contents of these 'Magazines' appear to be the exclusive work of Charlotte Brontë.

XXXVI

THE SONG OF ALBION TO MARINA

I THINK of thee when the moonbeams play
On the placid water's face,
For thus thy blue eyes' lustrous ray
Shone with resembling grace.

I think of thee when the snowy swan
Glides calmly down the stream ;
Its plumes the breezes scarcely fan,
Awed by their radiant gleam.

For thus I've seen the loud winds hush
To pass thy beauty by,
With soft caress and playful rush
'Mid thy bright tresses fly.

And I have seen the wild birds sail
In rings thy head above,
While thou hast stood like lily pale
Unknowing of their love.

POEMS · BY

Oh ! for the day when once again
Mine eyes shall gaze on thee ;
But an ocean vast, a sounding main,
An ever howling sea
Roll on between
With their billows green,
High tost tempestuously.

XXXVII

MARINA'S LAMENT

LONG my anxious ear hath listened
For the step that ne'er returned,
And my tearful eye hath glistened,
And my heart hath daily burned,
But now I rest.

Nature's self seemed clothed in mourning ;
Even the starlike woodland flower,
With its leaflets fair, adorning
The pathway to the forest bower,
Drooped its head.

From the cavern of the mountain,
From the groves that crown the hill,
From the stream and from the fountain,
Sounds prophetic murmured still,
Betokening grief.

Boding winds came fitful, sighing
Through the tall and leafy trees ;
Birds of omen, wildly sighing,
Sent their calls upon the breeze
Wailing round me.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

At each sound I paled and trembled ;
At each step I raised my head,
Harkening if it his resembled,
Or if news that he was dead
Were come from far.

All my days were days of weeping ;
Thoughts of grim despair were stirred ;
Time, with leaden feet seemed creeping ;
Long heart-sickness, hope deferred
Cankered my heart.

The two preceding poems are included in Charlotte Brontë's first love story, entitled *Albion and Marina*, which she completed on October 12, 1830. The story was printed in the Brontë Society Publications, Part xxx., 1920, pp. 5-18.

XXXVIII *

YOUNG MAN NAUGHTY'S ADVENTURE

MURK was the night : nor star, nor moon,
Shone in the cloud-wrapped sky,
To break the dull, tenebrous gloom
Of the arched vault on high,

When Naughty, with his dog and gun,
Walked lonely o'er the moor ;
True, the shooting-season had not begun,—
But poachers commence before !

The howling winds blew fierce around,
The rain drove in his face ;
And, as Naughty heard the hollow sound,
He quickened his creeping pace.

POEMS · BY

For as each hoarse sepulchral blast
Drew slow and solemn near,
It seemed like spirits sailing past
To his affrighted ear.

For he was on a dreadful errand bent
To the ancient witch of the moor ;
A delegate by his comrades sent
To consult the beldam hoar.

Now yelled the wind with more terrible din,
Now rattled the rain full fast ;
And, noiselessly gliding, forms were seen,
As around his eyes he cast ;

When a rustling sound in the heather he
heard :
Starting, he turned about ;
Was it a spirit ? Was it a bird ?
No ! a hare sprang trembling out.

The shot went ‘ Whizz ! ’ and the gun went
‘ Bang ! ’
A flash illumed the air ;
Far and wide the moor with the echo rang
As down dropped the luckless hare.

He ran to the spot, and, lo ! there lay
A woman on the hard heath-bed,
Whose soul had left its breathless clay,
For the witch of the moor was dead !

CHARLOTTE BRONTË. *October 14, 1830.*

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

THE VIOLET

A POEM

WITH SEVERAL SMALLER PIECES

BY THE

MARQUIS OF

DOURO

MEMBER OF THE SOCIETY OF ANTI-
QUARIANS; PRESIDENT FOR 1830 OF
THE LITERARY CLUB; HONORARY
MEMBER OF THE ACADEMY OF ARTISTS
& TREASURER TO THE SOCIETY FOR
THE SPREAD OF CLASSICAL KNOW-
LEDGE; CHIEF SECRETARY OF THE
CONFEDERATE HUNDRED FOR PRO-
MOTING GYMNAS TIC EXERCISES

&c. &c. &c.

PUBLISHED

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WELLINGTON'S GLASS TOWN, PARIS,
PARRY'S GLASS TOWN, ROSS'S GLASS
TOWN, &c. &c. &c. &c. &c.

November the 14th, 1830.

The above is a copy of the title-page of the original manuscript in which the five following poems are included. The MS. contains 16 pages, $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches by $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches, microscopic writing.

POEMS BY

XXXIX *

THE VIOLET

ONE eve, as all the radiant west,
Far-beaming with the liquid gold
Of sunset, gilt the mountain's crest
Girdling the sky with outlines bold,

And flung a broad and mellow light
Across the rocks that rose on high,
As pillars for the throne of night
Then shading soft the eastern sky,

I stood amid a desert vast :
Nor golden field nor mead was there ;
No tree or grove their shadow cast
Or shook their tresses in the air.

But one wide solemn wilderness,
Whose aspect filled the mind with fear,
Showed Nature in her sternest dress
With rugged brow and face severe.

Winds o'er that land have come and gone,
But, voiceless and unblest with sound
Of living song or human tone,
They ceaseless sigh and murmur round.

Yet oft the lonely traveller hears
A sigh as of some distant stream ;
And, lo ! far off in gloom appears
A mighty water's azure gleam.

No white sail glideth o'er its breast,
No snowy seamew cuts the waves,
But all unburdened and at rest
The passing surge that lone shore laves.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË.

Life in these wilds has ceased to be :

Not e'en the eagle's royal wing
Waves in the sky : no red-deer free
Makes with his cry this desert ring.

My heart quaked at the silence dead,
The utter silence reigning there ;
An incubus, an awful dread,
With leaden power oppressed the air.

At length a gentle breeze up-sprang :
With low, wild moaning, on it swept ;
It seemed Æolian music rang
As softly on the ear it crept ;

And, watered by that harp-like blast,
Thoughts rose within my spirit's cell
Of those who in long ages past
Attuned the muse's hallowed shell :

Of him,¹ the Bard that swept the lyre
Whose sounding strings were stained with gore ;
Whose agèd eyes shot heavenly fire,
Beaming beneath his forehead hoar.

All honour to that mighty one ;
Let earth with his great praises ring ;
Child of the self-illuminèd sun,
How did'st thou strike the trembling string

While music like a mountain-flood
Rolled forth as swept thy hand along,—
Wars, horrid wars and streaming blood
Ensanguined deep thy martial song ?

Greece, thy fair skies have flung their light
On mightiest of this sunlit world :
Genius, enthroned in glory bright,
O'er thee her banner hath unfurled.

¹ Homer.

POEMS BY

Now desolate, by time decayed,
Thy solemn temples mouldering lie ;
While black groves throw Cimmerian shade
Beneath a still transparent sky.

Degenerate are thy sons, and slaves ;
Athens and Sparta are no more ;
Unswept by swans, Eurotas laves
As yet its laurel-shaded shore.

Parnassus now uplifts her head
Forsaken by the holy nine :
They from her heights for aye have fled,
And now in fair Britannia shine.

If, rising from the silent tomb,
Thy tragic bards could see thee now,
What solemn clouds of grief and gloom
Would shade each spirit's lofty brow !

How would the haunted air resound
With moanings of each shadowy lyre !
How would earth tremble at the sound,
And quake before the wailing dire !

He,¹ that with soft but stately tread
Passed solemn o'er the Grecian stage,—
What tears of pity would he shed
At sight of thy base vassalage !

The tender,² and the terrible,³
Commingling each their notes of woe ;—
One strain with rage divine would swell,
The other sadly sorrowing flow.

Though fair Ausonia too hath sunk,
And fallen from her high estate ;
Though deeply she the cup hath drunk
Of vengeance, from the hand of Fate ;

¹ Sophocles.

² Euripides.

³ Æschylus.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Yet, 'mid her mighty ruins, oft
Some beauteous flower is seen to bloom,
Piercing with radiance mildly soft
Her crumbling cities' cloudy gloom.

Such, he ¹ that sang Jerusalem
In strains as sweet as ever flows
From harp of Mantua's glorious swain,²
Though heaven's own fire within him glows.

But no faint star on thee hath shone,
O Greece ! since set those orbs of light ;
Each in itself a quenchless sun
Refulgently, divinely bright !

And said I set ? No ! still they beam
With dazzling lustre far on high,
Aye sending forth a golden gleam
O'er azure of the vaulted sky.

And sons of Albion in the rank
Shine crowned with honours they have won ;
For deeply of the fount they drank :
The sacred fount of Helicon !

Hail ! army of Immortals, hail !
Oh, might I 'neath your banners march !
Though faint my lustre, faint and pale,—
Scarce seen amid the glorious arch,—

Yet joy, deep joy, would fill my heart :
' Nature, unveil thy awful face !
To me a poet's power impart,
Though humble be my destined place.'

'Twas thus arose my ardent prayer .
Amid the desert solitude ;
It reached the ' Mighty Mother's ' ear ;
She saw me where I lowly stood.

¹ Tasso.

² Virgil.

POEMS · BY

But first a voice went sweeping by
On the wild wind that murmured round :
From the deep bosom of the sky
Seemed to proceed that solemn sound.

Then shadowy vapours gathered fast
Which shut from view the pale moonlight ;
Swelled louder the triumphant blast,
High-pealing with tumultuous might.

The river's voice from distance far
Proclaimed some prodigy was nigh ;
Clouds veiled from sight each glimmering star,
And waned their splendour from the sky.

I trembled as a brighter ray,
Unknown from whence, illumed the air,
Transforming twilight into day,
As Luna's beam of silver fair.

Now dawned upon my awe-struck eyes
A shape more beauteous than the morn
When, radiant with a thousand dyes,
The pearls of night her brow adorn.

A woman's form the vision wore ;
Her lofty forehead touched the sky ;
Her crown, a rugged mountain hoar
Where plume-like trees waved solemnly.

Down fell her mantle white as snow ;
An azure river girt her round :
That liquid belt did circling flow
With faint, but never-ceasing, sound.

The heavenly and the terrene globe
In lines of light were pictured fair
On foldings of her spotless robe
Wide-floating on the ambient air.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Her dusky tresses, dark as night,
With crescent moon and stars were bound,
As through black clouds shone out their light
In rays of glory beaming round.

A gracious smile illumed her face
As throned she sate on clouds of light,
In attitude of heavenly grace,
Beneath an arch like rainbow bright.

Sweet as the echoes of the hill
At length her voice the silence broke :
In accents calm, serene, and still,
Thus, Nature, condescending, spoke :—

‘ Thy prayer hath reached me where I dwell,
In river, or in sounding cave,
By woodland bower, by hidden dell,
Or under ocean’s foamy wave.

‘ Thou would’st be one of that bright band,
The favoured children of the sky ;
The chosen from each shore and land
Of deathless fame and memory ?

‘ Mortal ! I grant that high request,
(But dim thy beam, and faint thy ray),
Partake the glory of the blest,
Son of Apollo, king of Day !

‘ Laurel thy temples may not bind :
In humbler sphere thy fate is set ;
That for the more exalted mind ;
But take yon lowly violet ;

‘ And press it, mortal ! to thy heart,
And wreath the floweret round thy brow ;
Oh ! never from that token part
Till death thy energies shall bow ! ’

POEMS BY

Thus spake the glorious deity,
Then passed in dazzling light away ;
The mighty sovereign of the sky
Shone never with so bright a ray.

I plucked the violet where it grew
Beside a stone, green moss amid ;
Its lovely leaflets bright with dew,—
Like modest worth, half seen, half hid.

Years have rolled o'er me since that night ;
Still doth the flower its perfume shed ;
Still shall it free from withering blight
Till I lie with the silent dead.

MARQUIS OF DOURO.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË. *November 10, 1830.*

This poem was printed (with facsimiles of the title-page and two pages of the original manuscript) in an edition limited to twenty-five copies for private circulation only, by Mr. Clement Shorter, in April 1916. Facsimiles of the same pages of the manuscript have also been given in *The Sphere*, April 22, 1916, pp. 94 and 96 ; and in *A Bibliography of the Writings in Prose and Verse of the Members of the Brontë Family*, 1917, p. 76, by Mr. T. J. Wise.

XL *

LINES ON SEEING THE PORTRAIT OF ———.¹ PAINTED BY DE LISLE

RADIANT creature ! is thy birth
Of the heavens or of the earth ?
For those bright and beaming eyes
Speak the language of the skies ;
And, methinks, upon thy tongue
Dwell the songs by angels sung !

¹ Marian Hume (Marina), betrothed to the Marquis of Douro.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Still and tranquil is the beam
That from those blue orbs doth stream,—
Like the azure moon-lit sky,
Like the lucid stars on high,—
Rays of mind are darting thence
Mild and pure intelligence.

Art thou then of spirit birth
And not a denizen of earth ?
No ! thou 'rt but a child of clay,
Simply robed in white array ;
Not a gem is gleaming there ;
All as spotless snow so fair,
Symbol of thy angel-mind,—
Meek, benevolent, and kind ;
Sprightly as the beauteous fawn
Springing up at break of dawn,
Graceful, bounding o'er the hills
To the music of the rills !

What bright hues thy cheeks adorn
Like the blushes of the morn !
How thy curled and glossy hair
Clusters o'er thy forehead fair !
How the sportive ringlets deck
Like golden snow thy ivory neck !
And thy hands so smooth and white
Folded, while the rosy light
Of a summer sunset sky
Gleams around thee gloriously,
All the west one crimson flood
Pouring light o'er mount and wood !

Beauteous being, most divine !
I am thine, and thou art mine !

MARQUIS OF DOURO.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË. *November 10, 1830.*

POEMS BY

XLI *

VESPER

I 'LL hang my lyre amid these ancient trees,
And while the sad wind moans the leaves
among,
Sweet forest-music of the harp and breeze
Shall steal the circumambient air along,
And I will sing meantime a low, responsive song.

What shall I sing ? Wilt thou, O rising moon !
Like a broad shield suspended in the east,
Wilt thou attend some melancholy tune
While sleeps thy light upon the river's breast
Whose swelling wavelets sink when by thy
beams caressed ?

No ! beauteous as thou art, thy gentle ear
Would count my music rugged, and 'mid clouds
Thou might'st offended hide thy silver ear,
And draw o'er heaven the dark and sombre
shrouds,
Concealing all the hosts of stars in radiant
crowds !

What shall I sing then ? Hark ! that sudden
swell
That rose in the old forest's glimmering light,
How like the tune of some old convent-bell
Borne on the traveller's ear at dead of night,
Sounding in utter silence with a tenfold might !

The rising wind hath stolen it from the strings
Of my sweet lyre, suspended in yon tree ;
And now the wild wood with rich music rings,
And thrilling cadences, most bold and free,
Are pealing round with heavenly melody.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

I need not sing to the armies of the skies :
Night's empress and the dryad wood-nymphs
fair !

I 'd rather list the tones that now arise
And fill with harmony the twilight air ;
Sweet sounds for all the winds beneath the
stars to bear.

Then I will sit and listen : not a voice
Disturbs the unbroken stillness of this hour ;
No nestling bird, with faintly rustling noise,
Raises the leaflets of the vernal bower,
Or bends the spray where blooms the fruit-
betokening flower.

Even the chorister of night is still !
Sweet Philomel restrains her 'customed song ;
Hushed are the murmurs of the unseen rill
Creeping through matted grass and weeds
along ;
And silence soon will reign these solemn shades
among !

MARQUIS OF DOURO.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË. *November 11, 1830.*

XLII *

MATIN

LONG hath earth lain beneath the dark profound
Of silent-footed, planet-crested night :
Now from the chains of slumber soft, unbound,
She springs from sleep to hail the glorious birth
of light.

A solemn hush lay on her hills and woods,—
Now, as the day approaches, fast dispelling ;
For at the touch of the bright orient-floods
Thousands of voices rise, in mingled murmurs
swelling.

POEMS BY

First the sun's glories tip the lofty hills,
Then roll impetuous down the dusky vale ;
Sing sweet in light the pebbled crystal rills,
And joy expands the buds or flowers that woo
the gale.

Oh ! I might sing of pastures, meads, and trees,
Whose verdant hue is tinged with solar
beams ;
And I might sing of morn's fresh, bracing breeze
That, with awakening breath, ripples the glassy
streams ;

And of the merry lark who soars on high,
Aye rising in his course towards the sun ;
Of his descending from the vaulted sky
To the expectant nest, when that sweet song
is done.

These I could sing if thou¹ wert near me
now,—
Thou whom I love, my soul's most fair delight ;
If the fair orbs that beam beneath thy brow
Shed o'er the darkling page their rays divinely
bright.

But now great waters of the mighty deep,
Howling like famished wolves, roll us between ;
Oh ! sad and bitter drops I mournful weep
To think of those vast leagues of tearing billows
green.

Come from the fairy valley where thou dwellest,—
Shady and green is Britain's favoured isle ;
Come, for all gloom and sadness thou dispellest,
And chase away my grief with one sweet sunny
smile.

¹ Marian Hume (Marina).

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Methinks I see thee sitting calm and lonely
Beneath the umbrageous elm upon the lawn ;
And near thee but the woodland warblers only
Singing their matin-song ; and perchance some
gentle fawn.

Or pearly dew's thy footsteps may be brushing,
Tripping as cheerful as the lambkins gay
Beside the cataract whose thunderous rushing
Covers its shaken banks with white-churned
bells and spray.

Hark ! Afric unto her desert sand now calls thee,
Where the bright sun outpours his fervid
beams ;
Alas ! the chain of love for aye enthralls me :
My prisoned heart still pants in wild and shift-
ing dreams.

I hear thy voice, I see thy figure nightly ;
Thou comest to me in midnight slumbers deep !
And through the dark thy blue eyes, glimmering
brightly,
Beam down upon my restless, spirit-haunted
sleep.

Oh ! but I loved to hear thy low sweet singing
When evening threw her quiet shades around ;—
The moon, her mild light through the casement
stealing,
Seemed from the sky to list the half-angelic
sound.

Thou to the scene a calmer beauty lending,
With eyes steeped in the lingering light of song ;
And from the harp, thy form so graceful, bending,
Drew melting notes that stole the dusky air
along.

POEMS BY

Oh ! when within thy still, retired bower
Shall I once more hear that dear entrancing
strain ?

Would I could win the oft-desired hour
That my bereavèd heart might beat with joy
again !

Oh ! still I hope for thy long-wished returning :
Come swiftly o'er the dark and raging
sea !

Come, for my soul with hope deferred is burning ;
Then will I sing a song worthy of morn and
thee !

MARQUIS OF DOURO.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË. *November 12, 1830.*

XLIII *

A SERENADE

AWAKE ! Awake ! fair sleeper. Awake and
view the night,
For the armies clad in diamond mail now shed
abroad their light ;
Come forth with me, fair sleeper ; perchance
upon our ears
While we walk may fall the chiming of the music
of the spheres.

We will go to the huge forest and harken to the
sound,
Like the voices of a hundred streams for ever
rushing round,—
Of nodding boughs and branches, great plumes
that wave on high,
And hide with their thick darkness the star-
bespangled sky.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

And haply, as we tread beneath that black embowered shade,
Full on our sight may sudden burst some moon-illuminated glade,
Where with crowns of radiant adamant and robes of vernal green
The morrice-dancing fairy train in other times was seen.

Or shall we wander by the side of ancient ocean's shore
Where the dull thundering billows are sounding evermore ?
And gaze into the mighty depths whence comes that 'wildering sound,
On the swift wings of heaven dispersing all around.

While still, sad music rises from regions far beneath,
At which the winds hush every sound or sign of murmured breath.
Unseen the sweet musician, but still the tones ascend,
And e'en the everlasting rocks their spray-white summits bend.

It is the maiden of the sea that sings within her cell,
Where she with gold and orient pearl in glimmering gloom doth dwell ;
And when her gleaming form is seen swift-gliding o'er the deep,
The blood within the seamen's veins in frozen streams doth creep.

For mighty winds behind her fly and clouds are round her shed,
And lurid lightning flashing wreathes the green locks on her head ;

POEMS BY

But she shall bode no stirring forms to rack the
lucid skies—

Then, Awake ! Awake ! fair sleeper, and unclosethine azure eyes !

MARQUIS OF DOURO.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË. *November 14, 1830.*

XLIV *

SONG

THE pearl within the shell concealed
Oft sheds a fairer light
Than that whose beauties are revealed
To our restricted sight.

So she who sweetly shines at home
And seldom wanders thence,
Is of her partner's happy dome
The blest intelligence.

The highest talents of her mind,
The sunlight of her heart,
Are all to illume her home designed,
And never thence they part.

Sung by the Marquis of Douro to Marian Hume, in the story entitled *Visits in Verreopolis*, by Lord Charles Wellesley, Vol. 1. Chap. i. The volume was commenced by Charlotte Brontë on December 7, 1830, and finished on December 11, 1830.

XLV

THE FAIRIES' WARNING

HEARKEN, O mortal ! to the wail
Which round the wandering night-winds fling,
Soft-sighing 'neath the moonbeams pale ;
How low ! How old ! its murmuring.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

No other voice, no other tone,
Disturbs the silence deep ;
All, saving that prophetic moan,
Are hushed in quiet sleep.

The moon and each small lustrous star
That journey through the boundless sky,
Seem, as their radiance from afar
Falls on the still earth silently,

To weep the fresh descending dew
That decks with gems the world,
Sweet tear-drops of the glorious blue
Above us wide unfurled.

But, hark ! again the sighing wail
Upon the rising breeze doth swell ;
Oh ! hasten from this haunted vale,
Mournful as a funeral knell !

For here when gloomy midnight reigns
The fairies form their ring,
And unto wild unearthly strains
In measured cadence sing.

No human eye their sports may see,
No human tongue their deeds reveal ;
The sweetness of their melody
The ear of man may never feel.

But now the elfin horn resounds,
No longer mayst thou stay ;
Near and more near the music sounds,
Then, Mortal ! haste away.

These verses appear in 'The Fairy Gift,' a tale related by Captain Bud in Chap. ii. of the story entitled *Visits in Verreopolis*, Vol. II. This volume was completed by Charlotte Brontë on December 18, 1830.

The verses are the last which were composed by her before her school-days commenced, on Wednesday, January 19, 1831, at Roe Head, Mirfield, Yorkshire.

POEMS BY

XLVI *

MARIAN'S SONG

HE is gone, and all grandeur has fled from the
mountain ;

All beauty departed from stream and from
fountain ;

A dark veil is hung
O'er the bright sky of gladness ;
And where birds sweetly sung
There 's a murmur of sadness.
The wind sings with a warning tone
Through many a shadowy tree ;
I hear, in every passing moan,
The voice of destiny.

Then, O Lord of the waters ! the Great ! and
All-seeing !

Preserve, in Thy mercy, his safety and being ;

May he trust in Thy might
When the dark storm is howling,
And the blackness of night
Over heaven is scowling.

But may the sea flow glidingly
With gentle summer waves ;
And silent may all tempests lie
Chained in Æolian caves !

Yet, though ere he returnest, long years will have
vanished,

Sweet hope from my bosom shall never be
banished :

I will think of the time
When his step, lightly bounding,
Shall be heard on the rock
Where the cataract is sounding ;

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

When the banner of his father's host
Shall be unfurled on high
To welcome back the pride and boast
Of England's chivalry !

Yet tears will flow forth while of hope I am
singing ;
Still Despair her dark shadow is over me flinging ;
But when he 's far away
I will pluck the wild flower
On bank and on brae
At the still, moonlight hour ;
And I will twine for him a wreath
Low in the fairies' dell ;
Methought I heard the night-wind breathe
That solemn word, ' Farewell ! '

July 1831.

This poem is included in an unpublished story by Charlotte Brontë, dated August 20, 1832.

In *The Red Cross Knight and Other Poems*, 1917, a pamphlet printed for private circulation only, in an edition limited to thirty copies, the poem was printed for Mr. T. J. Wise from a manuscript dated July 1831.

XLVII *

THE FAIRIES' FAREWELL

THE trumpet hath sounded, its voice is gone forth
From the plains of the south to the seas of the
north ;
The great ocean groaned, and the firm mountains
shook,
And the rivers in terror their channels forsook.
The proud eagle quailed in her aerial dome,
The gentle dove flew to her bowery home,
The antelope trembled as onward she sprang,
When hollow and death-like the trumpet-blast
rang.

POEMS BY

It was midnight, deep midnight, and shrouded in sleep

Men heard not the roar of the terror-struck deep
Nor the peal of the trumpet still sounding on high ;
They saw not the flashes that brightened the sky.
All silent and tomb-like the great city lay,
And fair rose her towers in their moonlight array :
'Twas the Ruler of Spirits that sent forth the sound
To call his dread legions in myriads around.

They heard him, and from land and wave
The genii armies sprung :
Some came from dim green ocean cave
Where thousand gems are flung ;

Some from the forests of the west,
'Mid dark shades wandering ;
A giant host of wingèd forms
Rose round their mighty king !

Some from the chill and ice-bound north,
All swathed in snowy shrouds,
With the wild howl of storms came forth
Sailing in tempest-clouds.

The gentler fays in bright bands flew
From each sweet woodland dell,
All broidered with the violet blue,
And wild-flower's drooping bell.

A sound of harps was on the blast
Breathing faint melody ;
A dim light was from distance cast
As their fair troops drew nigh.

And, mingling with stern giant forms,
Their tiny shapes are seen,
Bright gleaming 'mid the gloom of storms
Their gems and robes of green.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

The Hall where they sat was the heart of the sky,
And the stars to give light stooped their lamps
from on high.

The noise of the host rose like thunder around,
The heavens gathered gloom at the grave sullen
sound.

No mortal may farther the vision reveal :
Human eye cannot pierce what a spirit would seal.
The secrets of genii my tongue may not tell,
But hoarsely they murmured : ‘ Bright city,
farewell ! ’

Then melted away like a dream of the night,
While their palace vanished in oceans of light.
Far beneath them the city lay silent and calm ;
The breath of the night-wind was softer than balm
As it sighed o’er its gardens, and mourned in its
bowers,

And shook the bright dew-drops from orient
flowers ;

But still as the breeze on the myrtle-groves fell,
A voice was heard wailing : ‘ Bright city, farewell ! ’
The morning rose over the far distant hill,
And yet the great city lay silent and still.

No chariot rode thunderous adown the wide street,
No horse of Arabia, impetuous and fleet.
The river flowed on to the foam-crested sea,
But, unburdened by vessel, its waves murmured
free.

The silence is dreadful. O city, arise !
The sound is ascending the arch of the skies.
Mute, mute are the mighty, and chilled is their
breath,

For at midnight passed o’er them the Angel of
Death !

The king and the peasant, the lord and the slave,
Lie entombed in the depth of one wide solemn
grave.

POEMS BY

Now Ruin, dæmon of the wild,
Her shadow round hath flung ;
And where the face of beauty smiled,
Where sweetest music rung,

The tiger's howl shall oft be heard
Sounding through bower and dome,
And to the moon the desert-bird
Shall make her thrilling moan.

The murmur of the myrtle-bowers,
The voice of waving trees,
The fragrance of the sweet wild-flowers,
Shall mingle with the breeze.

Unheard that gentle wind shall sweep
The wide campaign of air ;
Unfelt the heavens their balm shall weep :
The living are not there.

December 11, 1831.

The above poem was written when Charlotte Brontë had been nearly twelve months at school. She appears to have decided to write no more about fairyland, and to have written the poem for the purpose of calling her fairies and genii together in their aerial palace over the city of Verdopolis to bid them ' Good-bye ! ' We do not meet them again in any of her poems or stories of a later date.

XLVIII *

OH ! there is a land which the sun loves to
lighten,
Whose bowers are of myrtle, whose forests are
palm,
Whose shores the pure rays of the amethyst
brighten,
Whose winds as they murmur are softer than
balm.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

The streams of that land spring in might from
their fountains,
Rush through the deep valley and o'er the vast
plain,
Pass swiftly the cloud-crested, sky-girdling
mountains,
As onward, bright-bounding, they meet the
wide main.

The boughs of the willow-tree, gracefully drooping,
Hang over their borders in shadowy gloom,
And on the green banks to the clear waters sloping
Flowers bright as the rainbow eternally bloom.

There silence asserts not her solemn dominion,
There the bird of the wilderness evermore sings,
Still tunes the sweet pipe, and still waves the soft
pinion,
While echo her tribute from far distance brings.

But though fair as bright Elysian dreams
These vernal Eden bowers,
Yet, oh ! this land hath other scenes
Than woods and streams and flowers.

High hills that woo the winds of heaven
To breathe upon them from the skies ;
Rocks tempest-shaken, thunder-riven,
Whose cliffs like giant turrets rise.

Great cataracts rolling down the steep,
Shaking the sky and steady shore ;
Rousing all nature from her sleep,
With hoarse, rebounding, thunderous roar.

Trees shaken by the wailing blast
Wave in the dim air mournfully ;
While sullen sounds float fitful past
Like the dull moaning of the sea.

POEMS BY

There rubies shed their blood-red ray,
There orient emeralds softly gleam,
There diamonds flash forth transient day
And emulate the solar beam.

But vainly the diamond sheds light through that
land
As though formed by the might of some fair
wizard's wand ;
And vainly the rivers flow forth to the sea
In brightness and beauty and sweet melody.

And the hills lift their tall stately summits on high,
And the winds are called forth from the heart of
the sky ;
And vainly the cataracts roll swift down the
steep ;—
To a murmur is softened the voice of the deep.

The bright sun in vain to this far land is given,
And the planets look forth from the windows of
heaven ;
The birds sing unheeded in woods fresh and green,
And the flowers grow unscented, ungathered,
unseen.

The lion rules the forest and the eagle the air :
Mankind is dominionless, portionless there ;
His voice never rang through those wide-spread-
ing woods ;
His bark never stemmed the wild rush of those
floods ;

His foot never trod on the green, flowery sward ;
No beast of those deserts acknowledged him lord ;
His hand never gathered those gems rich and rare :
Mankind is dominionless, portionless there.

December 25, 1831.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

XLIX *

THE BRIDAL

OH ! there is a wood in a still and deep
And solitary vale,
Where no sound is heard save the wild wind's
sweep
And the lay of the nightingale ;

And far in the depth of the leafy trees
An elm grows fair and high,
Where ever the voice of the solemn breeze
Sighs with soft harmony ;

And far beneath its trembling shade
Soft moss and green grass grow ;
There the violet and wild-rose bud and fade ;
There the lily and the hare-bell blow.

A rippling streamlet wanders near,
Unseen in the flower-blent grass,
But a murmur is heard full sweet and clear
As its silver waters pass.

'Twas night : a pearly lustre fell
On mountain, wave, and tower ;
Now spirits wove their magic spell
In many a hidden bower.

I lay within that calm retreat,
The green-wood shade among ;
And soon I sank to slumber sweet,
Lulled by the streamlet's song.

A strange dream o'er my spirit crept,
As in that shady dell
In silent peace I lay and slept,
While the balm of heaven fell.

POEMS BY

Methought I saw a wild deep sea,
And heard a sullen roar
As its mighty waves broke heavily
On the bleak and lonely shore.

I saw two forms of human mould,
Beneath a tall rock's shade,
Watching the long bright rays of gold
Far in the bright west fade.

One was a young and noble knight,
Stately, in plumèd pride ;
The other was a lady bright,
And she stood by the warrior's side.

I saw the dark light of the noble's eye
As he leaned on his white war-steed ;
But hers was as blue as the sapphire sky,
And frail was her form as the reed.

The young knight made a solemn vow
Of constancy till death ;
Truth's light beamed on his marble brow
While he pledged his knightly faith.

The lady smiled a heavenly smile
Which showed nor doubt, nor fear,
But there stood in her radiant eye the while
A bright and tender tear.

She took one lock of her golden hair
From all those clustering curls
Bound with a garland of flowers fair
And a string of orient pearls,

Then gave that token tremblingly
To the soldier by her side,
And he swore again by earth and sea
That she should be his bride.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Now changed the scene. Upon my sight
A lofty palace grew ;
And a sun-like splendour, a golden light,
High lamps and torches threw.

The juice of the scorched grape was sparkling
bright

With ruby-radiance and blood-red light ;
That nectar which lightens the weary soul
Gleamed in the wine-cup and wassail-bowl.

The music of harps and of trumpets rung,
And the strings of the wild guitar were strung ;
Full soft were the breathings of viol and lute,
While the clear clarion answered the tones of the
flute.

Now white robes fluttered and tall plumes glanced,
While nobles and ladies in bright rings danced,
Gracefully gliding the pillars among
To the sound of the harps and the joyous song.

I knew 'twas a bridal ; for under a bower
Of the rose and the myrtle and fair lily flower
Stood that stately noble in plumèd pride,
And that sweet, fair lady, his plighted bride.

With the mystic ring on her finger fair,
And the nuptial wreath in her radiant hair,
They are joined,—and forever the mingled name
Of Marina and Albion is hallowed to fame.

C. BRONTË. *July 14, 1832.*

L

LINES ON BEWICK

THE cloud of recent death is past away,
But yet a shadow lingers o'er his tomb
To tell that the pale standard of decay
Is reared triumphant o'er life's sullied bloom.

POEMS BY

But now the eye bedimmed by tears may gaze
On the fair lines his gifted pencil drew,
The tongue unfaltering speak its meed of praise
When we behold those scenes to Nature true—

True to the common Nature that we see
In England's sunny fields, her hills and vales,
On the wild bosom of her storm-dark sea
Still heaving to the wind that o'er it wails.

How many winged inhabitants of air,
How many plume-clad floaters of the deep,
The mighty artist drew in forms as fair
As those that now the skies and waters sweep;

From the great eagle, with his lightning eye,
His tyrant glance, his talons dyed in blood,
To the sweet breather-forth of melody,
The gentle merry minstrel of the wood.

Each in his attitude of native grace
Looks on the gazer life-like, free and bold,
And if the rocks be his abiding place
Far off appears the winged marauder's hold.

But if the little builder rears his nest
In the still shadow of green tranquil trees,
And singing sweetly 'mid the silence blest
Sits a meet emblem of untroubled peace,

'A change comes o'er the spirit of our dream,'—
Woods wave around in crested majesty;
We almost feel the joyous sunshine's beam
And hear the breath of the sweet south go by.

Our childhood's days return again in thought,
We wander in a land of love and light,
And mingled memories, joy—and sorrow—fraught
Gush on our hearts with overwhelming might.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Sweet flowers seem gleaming 'mid the tangled
grass

Sparkling with spray-drops from the rushing
rill,

And as these fleeting visions fade and pass

Perchance some pensive tears our eyes may fill.

These soon are wiped away, again we turn

With fresh delight to the enchanted page

Where pictured thoughts that breathe and speak
and burn

Still please alike our youth and riper age.

There rises some lone rock all wet with surge

And dashing billows glimmering in the light

Of a wan moon, whose silent rays emerge

From clouds that veil their lustre, cold and
bright.

And there 'mongst reeds upon a river's side

A wild bird sits, and brooding o'er her nest

Still guards the priceless gems, her joy and pride,

Now ripening 'neath her hope-enlivened breast.

We turn the page : before the expectant eye

A traveller stands lone on some desert heath ;

The glorious sun is passing from the sky

While fall his farewell rays on all beneath ;

O'er the far hills a purple veil seems flung,

Dim herald of the coming shades of night ;

E'en now Diana's lamp aloft is hung,

Drinking full radiance from the fount of light.

Oh, when the solemn wind of midnight sighs,

Where will the lonely traveller lay his head ?

Beneath the tester of the star-bright skies

On the wild moor he 'll find a dreary bed.

POEMS BY

Now we behold a marble Naiad placed
Beside a fountain on her sculptured throne,
Her bending form with simplest beauty graced,
Her white robes gathered in a snowy zone.

She from a polished vase pours forth a stream
Of sparkling water to the waves below
Which roll in light and music, while the gleam
Of sunshine flings through shade a golden glow.

A hundred fairer scenes these leaves reveal;
But there are tongues that injure while they
praise :

I cannot speak the rapture that I feel
When on the work of such a mind I gaze.

Then farewell, Bewick, genius' favoured son,
Death's sleep is on thee, all thy woes are
past ;
From earth departed, life and labour done,
Eternal peace and rest are thine at last.

C. BRONTË. *November 27, 1832.*

This poem was first printed under the tentative title of ' Lines
on the Celebrated Bewick ' in *The Times Literary Supplement*,
January 4, 1907.

LI *

THE AFRICAN QUEEN'S LAMENT

O HYLE ! thy waves are like Babylon's streams
When the daughters of Zion hung o'er them in
woe ;
When the sad exiles wept in their desolate
dreams,
And sighed for the sound of their calm Kedron's
flow.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

The palms are all withered that shadowed thy shore,

The breezes that kiss thee through sepulchres sweep :

For the plume of the Ethiop, the lance of the Moor
All under the sods of the battle-field sleep.

O Hylle ! that moonlight shines colder on thee

(Two lines undecipherable in MS.)

'Tis joy to the sound of thy desolate waves.

O Hylle ! thy children are scattered afar ;

All gone is their glory, all faded their fame ;

Crushed is their banner-staff, vanished their star,

Unburied their ashes, forgotten their name.

February 12, 1833.

The spelling of the name Hyle or Hylle is given as it appears in the MS.

LII *

DEATH OF LORD ROWAN

FAIR forms of glistening marble stand around

Whose fixed and sightless eyeballs chill the soul

As they stand cold and silent, while a sound

Is heard without of the deep thunder's roll ;

And wild, swift wind-blasts sweep the moonless sky,

Now with a far-off wail, now howling sternly nigh.

Stretched on that couch, I see an old man's form,

Whose head is hoary with a century's snow ;

He shudders while he lists the sullen storm ;

And the cold death-sweats trickle from his brow,

As his high palace echoes to a yell

Loud as a hundred tempests' mightiest swell.

POEMS BY

There lies Lord Rowan, all his eyes dark light
Quenched in the lapse of time; his raven hair,
Which once in grapelike clusters, thick and
bright,

Hung o'er his temples, now so wan and bare,
Falls down in meagre locks of hoary grey
Which turn to silver where the torch-beams play.

A cloud of costliest incense fills the room;
The wealth of nations shines resplendent round;
But shadowy horrors cast o'er him their gloom,
And near his death-bed fiendish whispers
sound,
Calling his soul with awful summonings
To stand ere morn before the King of Kings.

Now that dark contract, which in years gone by
He sealed with solemn oaths, weighs on his
breast

A fiery burden, that eternally
Will shut his spirit from the haven of rest,
And claim it where the wicked ceaseless cry,
And where the pangs of torture never die.

He hath lived long the terrible, the feared
Of all that journey on the sounding sea;
And long hath in the storm of battle reared
His blood-red pirate flag triumphantly.
His hand is known to all the sons of men
O'er hill and plain and far-off mountain-glen.

And ever it was rumoured through the land
That he was guarded by a spirit's might;
For still a shield, borne by some unseen hand,
Hovered around him in the raging fight;
And still, when fiercest tempests swept the sea,
His stately ship sailed on, unscathed and free.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

But now he feels the ghastly King draw nigh ;
The life-blood turns to ice in every vein,
As through the black night sounds that solemn
cry

Rising above the howling storm again.
Strongly he struggles : Death will have his
prey,
And 'mid responsive shrieks his spirit bursts away.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË. *March 26, 1833.*

LIII *

THE SWISS EMIGRANT'S RETURN

LONG I have sighed for my home in the mountain ;
Far I have wandered, and sadly I 've wept
For the land of the stream and the sweet-singing
fountain,—
The land which the torrent for ages has swept.

Back to the rock with its bosom of snow ;
Back to the wild-rushing river I come ;
Still may the waters in melody flow
With moan and with murmur, with ripple and
hum.

List to the voice of the far-tempest welling :
Darkly it broods o'er that white icy hill ;
Yet its dark music is deepening and swelling ;
Sounds the loud wind-blast more hollow and
shrill.

Stern is the welcome, and haughty and high,
Which greets my return to the land of my
birth ;
Thunder-peals speak from the heart of the sky ;
Pine-forests bow to the storm-smitten earth.

POEMS BY

Yet to my spirit more sweet is the sound
Than the music which floats over vine-covered
France

When the soft winds of twilight sigh soothingly
round,
When the stars in the firmament tremble and
glance.

And fairer those snowy peaks flash on my sight,
Beneath the black veil of that wild heaven above,
Than Italy's sky, ever cloudless and bright,
Than the sun which shines over that region of
love.

There stands the hut where my first breath I drew,
Perched like the nest of an eagle on high ;
Under that lone roof in childhood I grew,
And now I return 'neath its shelter to die.

LIV *

A SERENADE

' GENTLY the moonbeams are kissing the deep ;
Soft on its waters the yellow-rays light ;
Waken, my love, from the visions of sleep ;
Bend from thy casement, and gaze on the night !

' Now heaven is all clear, not a cloud flecks its blue :
Like a bow of bright sapphires it arches the main ;
While the cinnamon-perfumed and balm-breath-
ing dew
Wafts scents of Arabia o'er valley and plain.

' The bird of the night hath forgotten his song,
But hark ! how the tall trees are whispering on
high,
As a soft zephyr passes their branches among,
And wakes as it wanders a tremulous sigh.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

' Stars o'er our pathway resplendently shine ;
Dian is leading the hosts of the sky ;
Haste then and meet me, my fair Geraldine !
Come, we will walk where the silver sands lie.

' Whence came that whispered voice through the
still night ?
Faintly it sounded, yet sweet in mine ear :
Do thine eyes bend o'er me their soft dewy
light ?
Oh, say, my beloved, art thou wandering near ? '

The leafy boughs rustle in yonder dark grove ;
A white garment glances and floats on the
breeze ;
And, lo ! like a vision of beauty and love,
She glides from the shadow of wide-waving
trees !

LV *

A LAMENT

SOUND a lament in the halls of his father ;
Waken the harp-strings and pour forth a
wail ;
The caves of the hill the sad echoes will gather,
The chant will be sung by the wandering
gale.
Damp lies his corpse in the folds of the shroud ;
Low to the dust his bright forehead is bowed.

Weep in thy chambers where music is sighing ;
Weep in thy palace, fair bride of his heart ;
Thy love with the worms of corruption is
lying ;
Thou from his bosom forever must part.
Forever, forever,—how sad is that word
When by the lone grave of the buried 'tis heard !

POEMS BY

Shake from thy tresses the flower-wreath of gladness ;

Scatter its blooms to the winds of the sky ;
Cover thy brow with a mantle of sadness ;

Weep, for thy moment of mourning draws nigh ;

And leave that bright robe of the youthful and gay

For the grief-darkened weeds of the widow's array.

But louder and longer uplift a shrill wail

For the parent of him who sleeps low with the dead :

His eye shall grow dim and his cheek shall turn pale,

And the plumes shall droop low on that proud warrior's head

When he treads the lone isle of the desolate shore ;

When he hears that his loved one, his son, is no more.

He fell not in battle, he fell not in war,

Where conquest and carnage have followed his might.

No ! suddenly, silently, vanished his star :

At noon-day fell on him the darkness of night.

A murderer's voice bid his spirit depart ;

The hand of a traitor brought death to his heart.

Oh ! why was the morn of his young being clouded

By darkness so solemn, by horror so deep ?

And why was that fair form, all fettered and shrouded,

So early laid down in its long, dreamless sleep ?

What hand can dispel that dense, shadowy gloom

Which hides from our vision the volume of doom ?

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

LVI *

DESTINY

O WIND that o'er the ocean
Comes wafted from the West,
And fans with gentle motion
The deep's unquiet breast,—

Say, hast thou passed a stately ship
On the broad and boundless sea ?
Did the crimson flag of England float
From her mainmast gallantly ?

Did the pleasant sound of singing
Rise in thy gentle gale ?
Were harps in concert ringing
With the trumpet's hollow wail ?

And as she breasted the waters blue
And severed the mighty main,
Didst thou see upon her lordly deck
Some prince or noble's train ?

Was snowy plumage streaming ?
Were rich robes waving free ?
Were jewels brightly gleaming
'Neath a purple canopy ?

Spirit of the western breeze !
Silent sweeper of the seas !
If thou hast seen that gallant ship
Sailing the unfathomed deep,
Soon my doom shall sealèd be,
Fixed my future destiny ;

POEMS BY

Soon in saddest, wildest woe
I shall mourn my hapless love ;
Yes, ere heaven's crescent-bow
Shall light again this cedar-grove
I shall stand a weeping bride
At the altar's hallowed side.

But, though lost to me forever,
Worshipped, cherished of my heart,
I can still forget thee never,
Though on earth we part.
Loved one, we may meet again
In a land uncursed by pain !

The preceding four poems are included in an unpublished story entitled 'The Foundling : A Tale of our own Times,' by Captain Tree. The story was commenced by Charlotte Brontë on May 31, 1833, and finished on June 27, 1833. Facsimiles of the title-page and one page of the story containing part of the last poem are given on pp. 42 and 44 of *A Bibliography of the Writings in Prose and Verse of the Members of the Brontë Family*, 1917, by Thomas J. Wise.

LVII

LORD EDWARD AND HIS BRIDE

THE night fell down ail calm and still,
The moon shone out o'er vale and hill,
Stars trembled in the sky ;
Then forth into that sad pale light
There came a gentle lady bright,
With veil and cymar spotless white,
Fair brow and dark blue eye.

Her lover sailed on the mighty deep,
The ocean wild and stern ;
And now she walks to pray and weep
For his swift and safe return.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Full oft she pauses as the breeze
Moans wildly through those giant trees,
As startled at the tone ;
The sounds it waked were like the sigh
Of spirit's voice through midnight sky,
So soft, so sad, so dreamily
That wandering wind swept on.

And ever as she listened
Unbidden thoughts would rise,
Till the pearly teardrops glistened
All in her starlike eyes.

She saw her love's proud battleship
Tossed wildly on the storm-dark deep,
By the roused wind's destroying sweep,
A wrecked and shattered hull ;
And as the red-bolt burst its shroud
And glanced in fire o'er sea and cloud,
She heard a peal break deep and loud,
Then sink to echoes dull.

And as that thunder died away,
She saw amid the rushing spray
Her Edward's eagle-plume.
While thus that deadly scene she wrought
And viewed in the deep realms of thought
His soul's appalling doom,

A voice through all the forest rang :
Up like a deer the lady sprang—
' 'Tis he ! 'tis he ! ' she cried ;
And ere another moment's space
In Time's unresting course found place,
By Heaven ! and by our Lady's grace !
Lord Edward clasped his bride.

Included in an unpublished story entitled 'The Green Dwarf,' by Lord Charles Albert Florian Wellesley, commenced by Charlotte Brontë on July 10, 1833, and finished on September 2, 1833.

POEMS BY

LVIII *

THE HAUNTED TOWER

OH ! who has broke the stilly hush
Which hung around the spirits' tower ?
What strange wild tones and voices rush
Through the lone silence of their bower !

Who bade the builder's hammer ring
Through chambers dedicate to gloom ?
Who dared his household gods to bring
Where wander dwellers of the tomb ?

O thou who lists the spirits' song !
O thou who broke the spirits' rest !
Long shall their terrors deep and strong
Wake torture in thy guilty breast.

I bid thee by the spectral light
Of the wan moon that sails the sky,
And by the sunshine glad and bright
When dim night's loving spectres fly ;

I bid thee quit these haunted halls
Ere morn emits one golden ray.
Haste ! leave to us our ruined walls,
And speed thee on a brighter way.

Included in an unpublished short story entitled 'Brushwood Hall,' one of a series of pieces in a manuscript entitled 'Arthuri-ana, or Odds and Ends, being a Miscellaneous Collection of Pieces in Prose and Verse,' by Lord Charles A. F. Wellesley, commenced by Charlotte Brontë on September 27, 1833, and finished on November 20, 1833. The story in which the poem appears was completed on October 1, 1833.

The three poems which follow are also included in the same manuscript.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

LIX *

THE RED CROSS KNIGHT

To the desert sands of Palestine,
To the kingdoms of the East,
For love of the Cross and the Holy Shrine,
For hope of heavenly rest,
In the old dark times of faintest light
Aye wandered forth each Red Cross Knight.

Warmed by the Palmer's strange wild tale,
Warmed by the Minstrel's song,
They took plumed helm and coat of mail
And sabre keenly strong ;
Then left, O high and gallant band !
For unknown shores their own sweet land.

The Cross was still their guiding-star,
Their weapon and their shield ;
In vain the lance and scymitar
Opposing squadrons wield !
For still victorious from the fight
Came back each noble Red Cross Knight.

In vain shrill pipe and timbrels' swell
Rose from the turbaned host,
For still the bloody Infidel
The wreath of conquest lost ;
And still that garland's hallowed light
Crowned gloriously each Red Cross Knight.

The Lion King of Christendom
Sleeps where his fathers rest ;
And ne'er again did battle-hum
Sound from the calling East ;
And on Britannia's Island-shore
The Red Cross Knight was seen no more.

POEMS BY

Six hundred circles of our earth
Moved round the God of Light,
When, lo ! a great and glorious birth
Broke forth on Afric's night.—
Now flow, my strain, more swiftly flow :
Drink inspiration's spirit-glow.

For Gifford is thy wondrous theme :
The bravest, best of men ;
Whose life has been one martial dream
Against the Saracen ;
Reviver of the holy sign
Which whelmed with slaughter Palestine.

Hail, great Crusader ! lift the Cross !
Call to thy banners' shade !
And, heedless of all earthly loss,
Through blood, through carnage wade ;
Led by that high and heavenly gem,
The living star of Bethlehem.

Wade to the city of renown,
Wring Zion from her foe ;
Win for thyself a radiant crown,
For him eternal woe ;
Then shall earth's mightiest bless thy name
And yield to thee the palm of Fame.

October 2, 1833.

LX

MEMORY

WHEN the dead in their cold graves are lying
Asleep, to wake never again ;
When past are their smiles and their sighing,
Oh ! why should their memories remain ?

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Though sunshine and spring may have lightened
The wild flowers that blow on their graves ;
Though summer their tombstones have brightened,
And autumn have pall'd them with leaves ;

Though winter have wildly bewailed them
With her dirge-wind as sad as a knell ;
Though the shroud of her snow-wreath have
veiled them,
Still how deep in our bosoms they dwell !

The shadow and sun-sparkle vanish,
The cloud and the light flee away ;
But man from his heart may not banish
The thoughts that are torment to stay.

The reflection departs from the river
When the tree that hung o'er is cut down,
But on Memory's calm current for ever
The shade without substance is thrown.

When quenched is the glow of the ember,
When the life-fire ceases to burn,
Oh ! why should the spirit remember ?
Oh ! why should the parted return ?

Because that the fire is *still* shining,
Because that the lamp is still bright ;
While the body in dust is reclining
The soul lives in glory and light.

October 2, 1833.

This poem was first printed (with several slight variations in the text and minus the fifth and seventh stanzas) in *Scribner's Monthly*, May 1871, in an article entitled 'Reminiscences of Charlotte Brontë,' by A Schoolfellow (Miss Ellen Nussey). The complete poem was first printed in the *Cornhill Magazine*, February 1893. A later version of the same poem was printed in *Saul and Other Poems*, 1913, pp. 12-14, for Mr. T. J. Wise, in an edition limited to thirty copies for private circulation only.

POEMS BY

This was from a MS. dated August 2, 1835, the principal variation from the text as printed above being in the last stanza, as follows :

Because that the fire is yet shining,
Because still the ember is bright ;
While the flesh is in darkness reclining
The soul wakes to glory and light.

LXI *

SONG

THERE are lands where scents of flowers
All the air with fragrance fill,
Where fountains spring in myrtle bowers,—
But I love my native hill.

There are lands where birds are singing :
Ceaselessly their notes they trill,
Till the earth with song is ringing,—
But I love my native hill.

There are lands where woods are waving
Under skies for ever still :
Lands which golden streams are laving,—
But I love my native hill.

Though its barren, lonely wildness
Every heart with dread might chill ;
Though beneath no heaven of mildness,
Yet I love my native hill.

C. BRONTË. *November 20, 1833.*

LXII *

RICHARD CŒUR DE LION AND BLONDEL

THE blush, the light, the gorgeous glow of eve
Waned from the radiant chambers of the west ;
Now twilight's robe dim, orient shadows weave ;
One star gleams faintly lustrous in the east ;

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Far down it shines on the blue Danube's breast,
As calmly, wavelessly, its waters glide

On to the appointed region of their rest,
The sea, profound and hoary waste, and wide,
Whose blackening billows swell in ever restless
pride.

High o'er the river rose a rocky hill

With barren sides, precipitous and steep ;
There 'gainst the sunset heavens, serene and
still,

Frowned the dark turrets of a feudal keep.

The folded flag hung in the air asleep ;
The breathless beauty of the summer night

Gave not that Austrian standard to the sweep
Of freshening zephyr, or wild storm-blasts'
might ;

But motionless it drooped, in eve's soft, dying
light.

In that stern fortress there were arch and tower
And iron-wrought lattice, narrow, deep-
embayed,

Where the gloom gathered thick as night's mid
hour,

And round about it hung a chilling shade

Which told of dungeons where the light ne'er
played,

Of prison walls, of fetter-bolt and chain ;

Of captives, 'neath a tyrant's durance laid,

Never to view the sun's bright face again,

Never to breathe the air of free, wild hill and plain.

The moon had risen a host of stars among,

When to the embattled castle walls drew nigh
A wandering minstrel ; from his shoulder hung
A harp, sweet instrument of melody.

POEMS BY

He paused awhile beneath the turret high,
Then took his harp and all the sweet chords swept,
'Till the sound swelled beneath the silent sky,
And holiest music on the charmed air crept,
Waked from the magic strings, where till that
hour they slept.

Oh, how that wild strain o'er the river swelled
And mingled with its gentle murmuring !
From the true fount of song divine it welled :
Music's own simple, undefiled spring,
Notes rose and died, such as the wild birds sing
In the lone wood, or the far lonelier sky.

Oh ! none but Blondel, but the minstrel-king,
Could waken such transcendent melody,
Sweet as a fairy's lute, soft as a passing sigh.

The strain he sang was some antique romance,
Some long-forgotten song of other years,
Born in the cloudless clime of sunny France,
Where earth in vernal loveliness appears ;
Where the bright grape distils its purple tears,
And clear streams flow, and dim blue hills arise,—
A gleaming crown of snow each mountain wears
And there are cities 'neath her starry skies
As fair as ever blest with beauty mortal eyes.

BLONDEL'S SONG

*The moonlight sleeps low on the hills of Provence,
The stars are all tracking their paths in the sky :
How softly and brightly their golden orbs glance
Where the long shining waves of the silver Rhone lie !*

*The towers of de Courcy rise high in the beam
From sky to earth trembling, so lustrous and pale ;
Around them there dwells the deep hush of a dream,
And stilled is the murmur of river and gale.*

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

*There are groves in the moonlight all sparkling with
dew ;*

*There are dim garden-paths round that Castle of
Pride,
Where the bud of the rose and the hyacinth blue
Close their leaves to the balm of the moist eventide.*

*And long is the alley, dark, bowery, and dim,
Where sits a white form 'neath a tall chestnut
tree
Which waves its broad branches all darkling and
grim
O'er the young rose of Courcy, sweet Anna Marie.*

*And who kneels beside her ? A warrior in mail ;
On his helm there 's a plume, in his hand there 's
a lance ;
And why does the cheek of the lady turn pale ?
Why weeps in her beauty the Flower of Provence ?*

*She weeps for her lover : this night are they met
To breathe a farewell 'neath love's own holy
star ;
For to-morrow the crest of the young Lavalette
Will float highest and first in the van of the war.*

*Thus far sang Blondel, when a sudden tone
Of quivering harp-strings on his ear upsprung ;
It sounded like an echo of his own,
So faintly that mysterious music rung,
So sweet it floated those dark towers among
And seemed to issue from their topmost height.
Then there were words in measured cadence
sung,—
Now soft and low, then with a master's might
Poured forth that varying strain upon the stilly
night.*

POEMS BY

Who sings ? The minstrel knows there is but
one

Whose voice has music half so rich and deep,
Whose hand can summon from the harp a tune
So thrilling that it calls from latent sleep
Heroic thoughts, dims eyes, that seldom weep,
With tears of ecstasy, and fires the breast,
Till listening warriors from their chargers
leap,
Assume the glittering helm and nodding crest,
Unsheathe the ready sword, and lay the lance in
rest.

But not of war nor of the battle blast
Sung now the kingly harper. No, his strain
Was mournful as a dream of days long past ;
At times it swelled, but quickly died again.
And, oh ! the sadness of that wild refrain
Suited full well with the lone, solemn hour :
Too sad for joy, too exquisite for pain,
It touched the heart, subdued the spirit's power,
Blent with the Danube's moan, and wailed around
the tower.

RICHARD'S SONG

*Thrice the great fadeless lights of heaven,
The moon, and the eternal sun,
As God's unchanging law was given,
Have each their course appointed run.
Three times the Earth her mighty way
Hath measured o'er a shoreless sea,
While hopeless still from day to day
I've sat in lone captivity
Listening the wind and river's moan,
Wakening my wild harp's solemn tone,
And longing to be free.*

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

*Blondel ! my heart seems cold and dead,
My soul has lost its ancient might ;
The sun of chivalry is fled,
And dark despair's unholy night
Above me closes still and deep,
While wearily each lapsing day
Leads onward to the last long sleep :
The hour when all shall pass away,
When King and Captive, Lord and Slave,
Must rest unparted in the grave
A mass of soulless clay.*

*Oh ! long I 've listened to the sound
Of winter's blast and summer's breeze,
As their sweet voices sung around
Through echoing caves and wind-waved
trees ;
And long I 've viewed from prison-bars
Sunset and dawn, and night and noon ;
Watched the uprising of the stars ;
Seen the calm advent of the moon.
But blast and breeze, and stars and sun,
All vainly swept, all vainly shone,—
I filled a living tomb !*

*God of my fathers ! Can it be ?
Must I, the chosen of Thy might,
Whose name alone brought victory,
Whose battle-cry was, ' God my Right ! '
Closed in a tyrant's dungeon-cell
Wear out the remnant of my life,
And never hear again the swell
Of high and hot and glorious strife,
Where trumpets peal and bugles sing,
And minstrels sweep the martial string,
And wars and fame are rife ?*

POEMS BY

*No, Blondel ! thou wert sent by Heaven
Thy King, thy Lion-King to free :
To thee the high command was given
To rescue from captivity !
Haste from the tyrant Austrian's hold,
Cross rapidly the rolling sea,
And go, where dwell the brave, the bold,
By stream and hill and greenwood tree :
Minstrel, let Merry England ring
With tidings of her Lion-King,
And bring back liberty !*

Such was the lay the Monarch Minstrel sang.
A few bright moons waned from the silent
heaven,
And Albion with a shout of triumph rang
As once again her worshipped King was
given
Back to her breast, his bonds asunder riven.
And the sweet Empress of the subject sea
Sent up her hymn of gratitude to Heaven.
Through all her coasts she hailed him crowned
and free,
The champion of God's hosts, the pride of
liberty !

CHARLOTTE BRONTË. *December 27, 1833.*

Haworth, nr. Bradford.

On a high rock near the village of Dürrenstein or Diernstein, in Lower Austria, on the left bank of the Danube, are still to be seen the ruins of the castle in which Richard the First of England was imprisoned on his return from the Holy Land.

The poem makes it appear that Richard was imprisoned for three years, but this is not in accordance with historical records. Hume, the historian, says : ' King Richard was captured, by the Duke of Austria, in November 1192 ; and early in 1193 was transferred to the Emperor ; who confined him in the castle of Diernstein, in Lower Austria. He was liberated towards the end of January 1194 ; and landed at Sandwich on the 12th of March.'

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

LXIII

TWILIGHT SONG

THE moon dawned slow in the dusky gloaming,
Dimly beside it gleamed a star ;
Broken they shone on the waters foaming
Of the rapid Calabar.

The lustrous moon, the wailing river,
Woke in my breast the voice of thought ;
In that calm hour I blessed the Giver,—
The Source whence ray and man were brought.
And while they gleamed, and while they sung,
I gave them life, and soul, and tongue.

I asked the river whence its stream
Rushed in resounding pride ;
And a voice like whispers in a dream
Thus solemnly replied :

*From the caverned earth I rose,
Mortal, like to thee ;
Evermore my torrent flows
Sounding to the sea—
Ever as thy career will close
In vast eternity.*

I asked the rising crescent moon
O'er what her bow was bent,
And thus the sweet response came down—
From Heaven earthward sent :

*Alike my rays are glancing
On cities filled with life,
Where sounds of mirth and dancing
And harp and song are rife.*

POEMS BY

*And on the ruined tower,
The rifted arch and dome,
The fallen and trampled bower,
The still, the desert home.*

*Sounds of the palm-tree shaken,
Sounds of the lonely well
Whose fairy murmurs waken
To the zephyr's softest swell.
The waving of a pinion,
The desert wild-deer's tread,
Are heard in that dominion
Of silence deep and dread.*

*I see beneath me spreading
Dark visions of the slain ;
For my orb its light is shedding
O'er many a battle-plain
Where heroes famed in story
Their deeds of war have done,
And gained a crown of glory
For mighty conflicts won.*

*If to the wilds denying
That high and lofty trust,
The warrior's corpse is lying
Amid ancestral dust,
Still lovelier is the lustre
That lingers round his tomb,
And lights the trees that cluster
Above his last dark home.*

From chapter iii. of an unpublished story entitled 'A Leaf from an Unopened Volume, or The Manuscript of an Unfortunate Author,' dated January 17, 1834.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

LXIV *

DEATH OF DARIUS CODOMANNUS ¹

THE muffled clash of arms is past, as if it ne'er
had been ;
The lightning scymitar has sheathed its terrors
bright and keen :
Once bright, *once* keen, dark spots of blood bedim
its lustre now ;
And the sharpness of the tempered edge is dulled
by many a blow.

Dark windings of the valley's bed !
Deep gorges of the hill !
Bear further off that hurried tread
Which wakes your echoes low and dead :
It fails, and all is still.

Seems now as if no voice, no sound,
Had ever rung or moaned around,
Save perhaps some lone bird's plaintive song
Dying those wild, vast woods among
Unanswered, for there lingers there
No joyous denizen of air.

And that one wanderer, flitting by,
Vainly for sweet response might sigh,—
Vainly might hope for some far strain
To greet his warbled call again.

The breeze alone—shrill, dirge-like, sad—
Borne down those huge hills, cedar-clad ;
Deep hid in gloom, the river's rush
Pouring unseen through reed and bush ;
And (sign of utter solitude)
Strange sounds of alien rill and wood :

¹ Darius Codomannus was the last King of Persia of the Achæmenian dynasty. He reigned from 336 B.C. to 331 B.C.

POEMS BY

Woods that are murmuring far away ;
Rills that glide off in foam and spray
Through mistlike distance, dim and grey ;
No other sounds erewhile were heard
Responsive to the lonely bird.

But now there *is* another tone,—
Faint as the river's faintest moan ;
Low as the west-wind's softest sigh
Breathed sweet from an unclouded sky ;

Sad as the last note's calm decay
Ere the wild warbler flits away ;
Yet, heard through all, those tones belong
Neither to stream nor wood nor song.

They speak of life, they bear a thrill
Not native to the wordless grove ;
The whispered echoes of the hill,
The gushing waters of the rill
Have no such power to move.

And there *is* life : a human form
Lies prostrate in the vale
Like a reft victim of the storm,—
Fallen, bleeding, cold and pale ;

A stately form, though blighted now,—
For grandeur dwells upon his brow ;
And light shines in his lifted eye
Which looks on death unfearingly ;
And o'er him rests that placid grace—
Sign of high blood and noble race.

The forehead bears a diadem
Burning with many an orient gem
Stained ruddy now in blood.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

The starry robe, the flashing ring,
The pearls in bright and braided string,
All speak of Persia's slaughtered king
 Stretched dying by the flood.

Let not the glass be shaken,—
 Life's sands are ebbing low ;
Let no loud winds awaken,—
 The tide is past its flow.

The swords that gleamed around him
 Are reddened with his gore ;
The traitor-hands that bound him
 Will never bind him more.

All Iran ¹ has forsaken
 The god to whom she kneeled :
This word no more can waken
 Life on the battle-field.

Not one of all the glorious host
 That bowed to Mithras' ² beam
Ere Persia's crown was won and lost
 By Issus'³ fatal stream ;

Not one, who by the Granicus ⁴
 Poured forth their lives in blood ;
Not one, who on Arbela's ⁵ plain
 In serried phalanx stood ;

¹ Persia occupies the western part of the plateau of Iran.

² Mithras, the god of light, identified with the sun, was one of the three principal gods of the ancient Persians.

³ Issus, an ancient city in south-east Cilicia. In a neighbouring valley Darius Codomannus was defeated by Alexander in November 333 B.C.

⁴ Granicus is the name of a river in Asia Minor. It was there that Alexander gained a victory over the Persians in 334 B.C.

⁵ Arbela, a city in Assyria, was the headquarters of Darius Codomannus before he was finally defeated by Alexander on October 1, 331 B.C. The battle was not fought on 'Arbela's plain,' but near the village of Gaugamela, about forty-five miles west of Arbela.

POEMS BY

Not one remains to watch him now ;
Not one to wipe his death-damp brow ;
A monarch left without a throne :
Pomp, might, dominion,—all are gone !

A son bereaved, a childless sire,
A king slain in the traitor's ire ;
On the dark streamlet's wild bank lying
Behold Darius, lone and dying !

Where are now his farewell dreams
Fading fast as daylight's beams ?
Oh ! where rests the monarch's heart
Now, when life and glory part ?

Sees he with that glazing eye
Susā's ¹ gorgeous majesty ;
All the light of regal halls
Where the gushing fountain falls ;

All that rich and radiant ring
Once the guard of Asia's king ;
Gardens bright where flower and tree
Waved in airs of Araby ?

Whither wings his spirit now ?
Whither do his last thoughts flow ?
All his mighty empire lies
Round him as he droops and dies :

Ancient Egypt's storied pride,
With the dark Nile's ponderous tide ;
India rich in pearl and gem,
Hallowed by the Ganges' stream ;

Syria with her tideless sea
Ever sleeping placidly ;
Desert lands where wandering dwell
Ishmael's sons invincible ;

¹ Susa, chief city of the province of Susiana in ancient Persia, was a favourite residence of the Persian kings.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Fallen Palmyra, ruined Tyre
Where the Grecians' flood of ire
Burst so full and fierce and strong,
Rolled so dark and deep along,

That no voice was left to tell
How their sovereign-city fell :
As the prophet-doom was spoken,
' Her robe is rent, her sceptre broken ' !

Israel's God is conqueror now
Crown and plume have left her brow ;
She rests silent by the sea,
And so shall rest eternally.

Oh ! not to these the monarch turns ;
Not to glories passed away :
Remembrance in his spirit burns,
But not of power's decay.

A voice still whispers in his ear
Of one his word betrayed ;
And, shadow-like, there lingers near
A form that will not fade ;

The warning words of one who died,
That victim to a tyrant's pride,—
The Athenian voice of prophecy :
' King ! my Avenger's step draws nigh ;
The twilight of thy day is closing
And clouds are on its fall reposing ;
I hear the distant tempest sighing
In muttered murmurs, faint and dying ;
Asia with sound of arms is shaken,
But who will to the conflict waken ?
On rolls the foe in living thunder
Insatiate for the dazzling plunder !

POEMS BY

' The steelèd bands of Macedon,
The hosts of Ammon's haughty son,¹
Shall crush thy pomp, shall spurn thy gems,
Shall dye with blood thine Empire's streams ;
From Iran's throne its sovereign hurl,
And Mithras' gorgeous standard furl ;
For ever furl : the sacred fire
Shall never more to Heaven aspire ;
Its light shall fade, its flames shall die :
They own not Immortality.
Another Altar shall arise
Beneath the bright earth's cloudless skies.
King of the Earth ! thy course is run :
Remember me and Macedon ! '

Thus, boldly, Charidemus spoke,
Then sank beneath the tyrant's stroke ;
But his last voice to Heaven ascends,
And Heaven to hear its accent bends !

From the dark tomb Darius gave
There comes no murmur of a slave :
The hallowed blood of liberty
Sends from the dust its thrilling cry ;
Makes to the gods its stern appeal,
And summons Grecia's sons of steel !

They come ! They come ! A measured tread
Heavy and clanking, deep and dread,
Breaks up the hush, profoundly dead,
Of that wild rocky vale ;
And gleaming lance, and flashing shield,
Their blood-gilt light and glitter yield,
And plumes are on the gale !

¹ When Alexander the Great conquered Egypt in 332 B.C. he was crowned King, for which purpose (as the Pharaohs were held to be sons of the god Ammon) he visited the oracle Ammon in the Libyan desert, and was acknowledged son of the god.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Onward they come, a noble host !
Now in the deepening valley lost ;
Now through the wood-glade glancing seen :
All mailed and burnished, bright and sheen.

At length around the king they pour,
Of Grecia's hosts the pride and power.
Darius lifts again his eye ;
He sees not now the placid sky :
For the green-wood and lonely glen
He views a throng of steel-armed men.

The hum and clash swell stern and loud,
And o'er him many a form is bowed,
And many an eye of eagle-light
Meets piercingly his failing sight.

Tall warriors on their lances leaning,
Plume-shadowed brows of darkest meaning,
Surround the dying king ;
Their shapes before his vision swim
Ghost-like and wandering, faint and dim ;
Their voice sounds like a sacred hymn :
Low, solemn, murmuring.

One kneels beside and props his head,
And from the river's crystal bed
Sprinkles his ghastly brow ;
The cool clear water, as it falls,
A moment sight and speech recalls :
Darius knew his foe !

He clasped his hands, and raised his eyes
Bright with forgiveness to the skies ;
He blessed his conqueror in that hour ;
He prayed for added might and power
To follow Asia's alien lord
And strengthen his resistless sword !

POEMS BY

Statira's ¹ shade is near him now :
She lightens thus his kingly brow,
And with her calm and holy smiles
Her lord and captor reconciles !

But soon that gentle shade is gone,
And Vengeance lingers there alone :
A sudden gloom falls round the king ;
Stern thoughts within his bosom spring.

The rebel-satrap and his band :
Men of unhallowed heart and hand,
Before their slaughtered monarch rise :
His curse falls on them ere he dies ;—

' Soldiers of Greece and Macedon !
For the dark deed by Bessus ² done
I leave revenge to Ammon's son :
He before whom all Persia fell—
The glorious ! the Invincible !
The lord of Cyrus' ³ solemn throne :
The crowned in haughty Babylon !—
I charge him by his power and pride
To think how Iran's monarch died ;
To turn the traitor's blood-stained sword
Back to the bosom of its lord !
A bitter draught he gave his king :
His lips shall drain the same dark spring.
Warriors ! I may not longer stay
For Mithras calls my soul away ! '

¹ Statira, wife of Darius, was captured by Alexander after the battle of Issus, 333 B.C., and was treated by him with honour and humanity.

² Bessus was a satrap of Bactria, under Darius Codomannus. He seized Darius soon after the battle of Gaugamela (Arbela), 331 B.C., and carried him off. Being pursued by Alexander, he murdered Darius. He was soon betrayed to Alexander, who had him executed, 328 B.C.

³ Cyrus the Great, founder of the Persian Empire.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

He said ; his pale lips ceased to quiver ;
His soul soared to its awful Giver ;
The host stood round all hushed and still
While dirge-like murmured breeze and rill.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË. *May 2, 1834.*

LXV *

STANZAS

ON THE FATE OF HENRY PERCY

‘ Lieutenant Henry Percy, it is well known, took a voyage to the South Sea Islands on board the *Mermaid*—Commander : Captain Steighton.

‘ He was drowned off Otaheite. I have heard strange reports respecting the manner of his death, many of them from undeniably authentic sources. To give the reader some insight as to their nature, I need only say they tend to fix another crime of the darkest dye in the character of his terrible father.¹ Steighton was a minion of the elder Percy’s. Men say he served him but too well in the matter now before our notice.’

CHARLOTTE BRONTË.

ON THE FATE OF HENRY PERCY

THE tropic twilight falls, the deep is still ;
All turmoils of the busy day are past ;
From the calm lands no voice sounds deep or
shrill ;
No murmur from the world of waters vast,
Save its own ceaseless sound that breeze or
blast
Now chafes not into dull or thundering moan.
The faintest gleam of eve is o’er it cast ;
And, oh ! how sweet, how holy is the tone
That swells from each green wave, then trembling
dies alone !

¹ Alexander Percy, Earl of Northangerland, and Prime Minister of Angria. See p. 184.

POEMS BY

There 's not a boat upon the darkened billow,
There 's not an oar dips in the moonlight main ;
Each islander rests on his happy pillow,
Each swift canoe has sought its home again ;
And neither ringing shout nor trembling strain
Comes from the shore to break the green sea's rest :
All earth lies hushed to watch the glorious wane
Of that bright sunset from her burning breast ;
To see the light of heaven die dim and soft and blest.

Fair southern islands ! they are sweetly sleeping,
While the stars gather in their heaven above,
While sky-breathed airs the deep dark woods are
sweeping
In gales too low to wake the slumbering dove ;
Almost too faint to bend the palmy grove.
Intenser purple grows that kindling dome,
And brighter flash those orbs of light and love :
Sweet tropic islands ! ye are beauty's home ;
Oh ! who from your bright shores to colder lands
would roam ?

Midnight is near : that bark upon the water
Has furled her sails and set her watch on deck ;
She rides at anchor, Neptune's noblest daughter ;
The very waves seem subject to her beck ;
They dare not dash her glory to a wreck !
How the cool foam curls round her mighty bows
As fair as braided pearls on beauty's neck !
How the wild wave more softly gliding flows
Where that proud ocean-queen far down her
shadow throws !

A wondrous stranger ! from afar appearing,
Long has she walked the path that leaves no
track ;
And her brave crew, a thousand hazards daring,
Still scorned to turn their noble vessel back.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

No heart fell cold, no hand grew faint and
slack,
As on with heaven above and waves beneath,
And round a wild horizon, densely black,
They stretched before the trade-gales' fiery
breath ;
Looked full of joy to hope, and fearlessly to death !
Now all is tranquil : they have gained their
bourne,
The fair blest island of the stormless sea,—
Those happy shores where man may cease to
mourn,
Where all is peace and bliss and harmony ;
Gardens of many a wondrous flower and tree ;
Homes of strange birds with wings of rainbow
light ;
Shapes formed by nature in her fantasie,
Glowing and fresh and fair and Eden-bright ;—
But these were now unseen, beneath the veil of
night.

And one within that anchored bark is sleeping :
The youngest, fairest, bravest of her crew.
Oh ! how the stars his brow with light are
steeping,
The sails to his lone berth they tremble through.
He sleeps on deck, and many a pearl of dew
Gleams in his light hair as unroofed he lies,
And from the abyss of pure deep speckless blue
A sweet gale round him wildly sings and sighs ;
A dirge comes to the ear, so sad each cadence dies.

Would he might waken ! some sad dream is on
him ;
How heavily the breath flows from his breast !
Some unseen influence strangely dwells upon him,
Some mournful memory will not let him rest.

POEMS BY

Whate'er it was he calms : the unwelcome guest
Has passed away with all its mystery ;
And now, his clasped hands to his bosom
pressed,
He turns his fair face to the solemn sky,
His forehead woos again the low breeze wander-
ing by.

Yes ! he has dreamed of one now far away,
His own sweet Florence,¹ she who was his bride
Ere thirteen summer suns had flung their ray
With gentlest glow on her youth's springing
pride.

Oh ! often had he wandered by her side
Through woodland walks and alleys dimly bright,
Too happy to discern how fast the tide
Of time was lapsing into shadowy night,
How swift the gloaming veiled each parting ray
of light.

And now he saw her in a lofty chamber
Solemn and grandly vast ; he knew it well ;
And as a light stole down from lamps of amber
The veil of years and distance sundered fell.
Faintly there tolled her father's castle-bell :
It spoke the midnight hour ; then all was hushed ;
Round on the panels pictured visions swell
Where forms of buried beauty voiceless blushed,
And the rich silent light more softly o'er them
gushed.

Calm, tenderly, and pure the moon was shining ;
Through one vast window its white lustre
streamed ;
On her it fell, her loveliness refining
To beauty such as mortal never dreamed.

¹ Florence Marian Hume (usually called Marian), who became the wife of the Marquis of Douro, afterwards King of Angria (Zamorna).

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Her blue eyes looked to heaven : how bright
they beamed !
How their deep zones caught glory from the sky !
And as the long fringe trembling o'er them
gleamed
Their lucid light was almost mystery :
They shone like mirrored stars that glassed in
dark waves lie !

Henry ! she looks to heaven through that vast sea,
That boundless ocean decked with isles of light :
Are her thoughts travelling to their home in thee ?
Wake (?) they remembered from the radiance
bright
That fills her eye ? A touch of love's own
might
Has surely clothed her in such living grace ;
'Tis not the calm serenity of night
That brings the blood so swiftly to her face
Like the clear flush of wine seen through a crystal
vase.

Yes, it is love, but not such love as thine :
Not that pure, young affection of the breast
That used to breathe of peace and bliss divine,
And o'er her white brow fling a shade of rest.
Oft with his hand in hers in transport pressed
Henry has watched that calm fall on her cheek,
And while his own heart felt most deeply blest
Has wished a blush of bashfulness to break :
What seemed to him too still, too sisterly, too
meek.

She's not alone—there's one¹ beside her bending :
Is it a friend ? The form is dark and high,—
A magic to the solemn chamber lending.
Flashes through darkness that refulgent eye—

¹ Zamorna.

POEMS BY

Its fixed gaze calls that blush and wakes that
sigh,
And well might timid maiden shrink and quail,
For never yet a shape on earth passed by
So like a spirit in a mortal veil :
The cheek that glows for it will soon turn deadly
pale.

At once the chamber fades in slow decay,
The lights are quenched that erst so softly shone,
The dream revolves, the vast hall melts away,
And gleaming arch and golden lamp are gone,
And all is dim and imageless and lone.
But trees are rustling in the darkened air,
And mossy grass the pavement springs upon,
And for the vanished taper's dazzling glare
There dawns a gentle gleam—faint, mellow,
mildly fair.

Now o'er the scene a mighty wood is sweeping,
And long deep glades on through it glimmering
go ;
Rays of the moon the spectral boughs are
steeping :
They wave in winds whose voice sounds wild
and low ;
And from far off a river's dreary flow
Swells ceaseless, though the gale at times be still ;
And though the strange sighs, wandering to
and fro
Like spirit's wailings, cease the heart to thrill,
Yet the swift waves rush on of that unpausing rill.

The maiden and the shape stand in the lustre
Flung from the sky on that star-silvered glade ;
Those mighty arching trees that round them
cluster
The flood of glory with their shadows braid ;

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

And when a sudden wind among them played
They swung like giant phantoms on the grass :
All their boughs trembled, all their foliage
swayed.

Ghosts, such as they, in cloudy gloom might
pass
Amid the gleaming pomp of some dread wizard's
glass !

The maiden weeps : clear moonlit tears are
sparkling

Upon her cheeks ; fast from her eyes they gush.
She looks to *him* : his brow grows strangely
darkling ;

His cheek is shadowed with a sudden flush
Of earnest, eager triumph : that rich blush
Fades not before her mute and sad appeal.

Now passion's waves of conflict o'er her rush :
The sob, the tear, the pallid brow reveal
How wildly strong the love her heart and spirit
feel.

Oh ! Henry knows his Florence loves *him* not ;

Not as he would be loved, not as his bride ;
Then youthful tenderness is all forgot,
All vanished in the rapid burning tide
That flows resistless from those eyes of pride
Flashing into her heart so fixedly.

The voice of that strange vision by her side
Brings with its sweet, deep music other joy
Than that which erewhile woke to bless her fair-
haired boy.

The token of their love is on her finger :

A golden circlet like a ring of light ;
And round her small, sweet lip there seems to
linger

Some saddening touch of memory's holy might.

POEMS BY

The tears, too, glancing as the lamps of night
From their clear sources are not tears of bliss ;

But almost ere they tremble into sight
Her stately lover dries them with a kiss,
And soothes her spirit's awe with some proud
warm caress.

Sudden a voice comes to the dreamer's ear
Mournful and sadly murmured, low and dread ;
At first it wailed far off, then whispered near :

Percy ! thy Marian deems her bridegroom
dead ;

Lover she mourns not : when the rumour
spread
She strove to quench the joy that filled her
breast.

Yes ! when she heard that the unfathomed bed
Of the wild sea was by her Henry pressed
She wept that she should feel so deeply, truly
blest !

And, Percy ! she shall be thy rival's bride ;
She from his hands shall take the marriage-
wreath,

And, standing at the altar, side by side,
Each unto each resolves of faith shall breathe—
Oaths of eternal fealty till death ;

And hill and plain shall with that bridal ring ;
Breezes shall waft it with their balmiest breath ;
Minstrels shall raise the song and strike the
string ;

And wide the fires of joy like beacon-lights shall
spring.

Full glad shall be her life, in bright halls dwelling,
Beneath the awful light of those loved eyes,
The fount of perfect bliss for ever swelling,—
Deep, fathomless, exhaustless in the skies,—

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Shall, sparkling to her very lips, arise.
Yet there are warnings of an early end : ¹
There breathes afar a dreary sound of sighs,
And cold the tears of lonely woe descend :
Shades of untimely death, how silently ye blend !

Percy ! thy love so strong, so unreturned,
Shall be avenged on earth : her time is brief ;
The radiant form for whom her spirit burned
Shall smile awhile, then leave her bowed with
grief.

The reaper's sickle shall cut down the sheaf
While the young corn is budding fresh and green ;
She shall be gathered like a springing leaf ;
One year, and that fair plant is no more seen ;
Few e'en shall know where once its sunny place
has been.

And never from that vision woke
The journeyer of the deep :
Ere the pale light of morning broke
He slept his final sleep.

The coral banks of those far isles
Now pillow Percy's head ;
Their blessed moon for ever smiles
Above his lonely bed.

And many a spicy zephyr sings
Sweet from those radiant skies ;
And many a bright bird waves its wings
Around where Henry lies.

No more his rayless eyeballs shine,
No more his curls are fair ;
For tangled seaweeds wet with brine
Are garlanding his hair.

¹ See the note to the poem 'Regret,' p. 203.

POEMS BY

But how he died no tongue can tell :
No eye was there to see ;
Yet the winds that were his requiem knell
They moaned him mournfully.

Some say the decks were red with blood
And wet with trampling feet ;
It recks not : he sleeps in the secret flood
With surge for his winding-sheet.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË. *June 15, 1834.*

LXVI *

A NATIONAL ODE FOR THE ANGRIANS

THE sun is on the Calabar, the dawn is quenched
in day,

The stars of night are vanishing, her shadows
flee away ;

The sandy plains of Etrei flash back arising light,
And the wild wastes of Northangerland gleam
bright as heaven is bright.

Zamorna lifts her fruitful hills like Eden's to the
sky,

And fair as Enna's fields of flowers her golden
prairies lie ;

And Angria calls from mount and vale, from wood
and heather-dell,

A song of joy and thankfulness on rushing winds
to swell.

For Romalla has put his robe of regal purple on,
And from the crags of Pendlebrow the russet
garb is gone ;

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

And Boulsworth off his giant sides rolls down the
vapours dim ;
And Hawkscliffe's bright and bowery glades
uplift their matin hymn.

The ancient hills of Sydenham have never felt
the glow
Of such a dawn as that which burns their blush-
ing summits now.

The fields and woods of Edwardston are full of
song and dew ;
Olympia's waves glance clear along their wander-
ing line of blue.

Green Arundel has caught the ray upspringing
from the East ;
Guadima rolls exultingly with sunshine on its
breast.

All Angria through her provinces to arms and
glory cries :
Her sun is up and she has heard her battle-shout,
' Arise ! '

My Kingdom's gallant gentlemen are gathered
like a host :
With such a bold and noble band was never
conflict lost !

For they would fight till the red blood burst in
sweat-drops from their brow,
And never to the victor's yoke their lion-souls
would bow.

Enara on the Douro's banks his serfs is
gathering ;
From hut and hall on the highland heath the sons
of Warner spring ;

POEMS BY.

And Howard o'er his breezy moors the bugle-blast has blown :

O Leopard ! swift are the ready feet that answer to that tone.

The Gor-cock quailed at the summons shrill
unconquered Agar sent ;

A living whirlwind crossed the tracks that marked
the withered bent ;¹

Proud Moray called from the Calabar his vassals
to the fight ;

And the Lord of Southwood joyously has raised
the flag of light.

Segovia's dark, Italian eye is lit with high-born
pride ;

The Chevalier of Arundel has bade his horsemen
ride ;

Young Stuart in the ranks of war uplifts his
lofty plume ;

And Roslyn like a red-deer bounds from the
depths of mountain-gloom ;

And Seymour's heir has heard a voice come from
the ancient dead :

At once the ancestral dauntlessness through all
his veins was shed.

But the sullen flag of Percy swells most proudly
to the breeze

As haughtily the folds unfurl as if they swept the
seas !

Patrician Pirate ! On each side his blighting
glance is flung :

The silent scorn that curls his lip can never know
a tongue !

¹ This line is a correct transcript from the author's MS.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Upon his melancholy brow a melancholy
shade,
Like snow-wreaths on Aornu's slope, eternally
is laid.

But the son of that tremendous sire amid the
throng appears,—
His second self unpetrified by the chill lapse of
years :

A form of noblest energy, most sternly beautiful ;
A scymitar whose tempered edge no time can
ever dull ;

A sword unflushed, a quenchless flame, a fixed
and radiant star ;
A noble steed caparisoned which snuffs the fight
afar !

The glory of his youthful brow, the light of his
blue eye,
Will flash upon the battle's verge like arrows of
the sky.

With such a host, with such a train, what hand
can stop our path ?
Who can withstand the torrent's strength when
it shall roll in wrath ?

Lift, lift the scarlet banner up ! Fling all its
folds abroad,
And let its blood-red lustre fall on Afric's blasted
sod :

For gore shall run where it has been, and blighted
bones shall lie
Wherever the sun standard swelled against the
stormy sky.

POEMS BY

And when our battle-trumpets sound, and when
our bugles sing,
Thé vulture from its distant rock shall spread its
glancing wing ;

And the gaunt wolf at that signal cry shall gallop
to the feast :
A table in the wilderness we 'll spread for bird
and beast.

We 'll sheath not the avenging sword till earth
and sea and skies
Through all God's mighty universe shout back,
' Arise ! Arise ! '

Till Angria reigns Lord Paramount wherever
human tongue
The ' Slaves' Lament,' the ' Emperor's Hymn,'
in woe or bliss hath sung !

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS ADRIAN WELLESLEY.
C. BRONTË. *July 17, 1834.*

At the time this ' national ode ' was written Charlotte Brontë had been writing about Angria (first calling it ' The Country of the Genii ') for more than five years, *i.e.* since she was twelve years of age. She chose the, at that time, little-known region which is drained by the Calabar River, east of the Niger delta, in West Africa, for the situation of her country, which grew in her imagination until, at the time now reached, it had seven provinces : Zamorna, Edwardston, Sydenham, Northangerland, Arundel, Howard, and Warner, with the rivers Olympia, Gaudima, Calabar, and Douro. Most of the persons mentioned in the poem are much-written-about characters in her early stories. The supposed writer of the poem is her early hero, the Marquis of Douro, now the Duke of Zamorna, and King of Angria, who is usually referred to simply as Zamorna. The derivation of the name ' Zamorna ' has puzzled several writers on Brontë subjects. Miss May Sinclair, in her entertaining and admirable book, *The*

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Three Brontës, writes of 'that one fantastic name "Zamorna."'
It was obtained by the addition of one letter to 'Zamora,' the name of a province in Spain, and also of a small city on the Douro River.

LXVII

THE SPELL

THE wave of Death's river
Hides the rose in its bloom ;
The Gift and the Giver
Sleep low in the tomb ;

The fresh fruit is shaken,
The bright blossom strown ;
The flower lies forsaken
And withered and lone.

Then upward to heaven
The dim cloud shall swell ;
The veil shall be riven
And broken the spell.

But slowly the cloud must rise ;
Faint is the gale
That sighs through the muffled skies,
Breathes on the veil.

High was the wanderer's power,
Wondrous his spell ;
It wrought, in their natal hour,
Strongly and well.

A might is yet on them
No mortal can quell ;
A charm rests upon them
Which none can dispel.

POEMS BY

The watch through the dark time
Of star and of shade,
The shadow shall vanish,
The starlight shall fade.

These verses are included in an unpublished story entitled 'The Spell : an Extravaganza,' by Lord Charles Albert Florian Wellesley, commenced by Charlotte Brontë on June 21, 1834, and finished on July 21, 1834. The first three stanzas, with slight variations, appear in the first chapter of the story, and the whole poem in the second chapter. The verses are 'a poetic incantation heard at the birth of Zamorna and recurring at crises in his life,' on this occasion being 'heard at the scene of the burial of Zamorna's infant heir beside its mother.' The original manuscript of the story is in the British Museum.

LXVIII

SAUL

(1 Samuel 17 : 2—And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered together, and pitched by the valley of Elah, and set the battle in array against the Philistines.)

'NEATH the palms in Elah's valley
Saul with all his thousands lay ;
Israel's mightiest nobles rally
Round their own anointed stay.
This has been a battle-day,
And the host lie wearily
On the field of conflict won,
Where their slaughtered foemen be,
Spear and target stretched upon.

Saul within his purple tent
Seeks for rest, and seeks in vain ;
Still a voice of sad lament
Mingles with the trumpet-strain
Sounding o'er that war-like plain.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

And the spirit of the King
Darkens with a cloud of woe,
Thicker, denser, gathering
As the rapid moments flow.

‘ Abner,’ thus the monarch said,
‘ God has left me desolate ;
All my heart is cold and dead,
Crushed amid my royal state ;
Samuel bid me ever mourn,
Crown and Kingdom from me rent ;
Saul is not a man to turn ;
Israel’s strength can ne’er repent.

‘ Abner, is it day’s declining
Brings this hour of darkness on ?
As the evening sun is shining
Then I feel most sad and lone.
Lo ! its beams are almost gone ;
How their kindled glories burn
All along our tented field !
Spear and helm their flash return,—
Back it beams from lance and shield.

‘ Palm and cedar catch the lustre
Shining on them, bright and sheen ;
Where those woods of olives cluster,
Light has lit their fadeless green.
Those far hills are gem-like seen
Sparkling through the crimsoned air,
All with roseate light imbued ;
Abner ! never scene so fair
Smiled on Monarch’s solitude.

‘ Once I could have smiled again,
Full of hope, and young and free ;
Now its beauty turns to bane
And my spirit wearily
Shrinks that sight of bliss to see ;

POEMS BY

It hath no communion now
With a fair and sunny sky ;
Nature's calm and stormless brow
Waken in me no sympathy.

' Oh ! methinks were heaven scowling,
Were those green hills black and hoar,
Were the winds and billows howling
Dashed against a sullen shore,
Dark and cheerless evermore,—
I should feel less full of woe,
Full of God-cursed misery,
Than when breezes soft and low
Whisper round me peacefully ;

' Than when eve and twilight meet,
Dawning star and setting sun,
All that Earth has, calm and sweet,
Resting her bright plains upon,
Toil and strife and battle done ;
Silent dews around me weeping,
Gleaming on the warrior's brow,
The weary warrior, hushed and sleeping
By his conquered foe.

' But I 'll cease my bootless sighing :
Bid the son of Jesse come ;
Let his music, soft and dying,
Win my spirit from her gloom,—
Call her exiled sunshine home :
He has many a sacred air,
Many a song of holiness
That perchance may soothing bear,
Even to me, one hour of bliss.'

C. BRONTË. *October 7, 1834.*

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

LXIX *

THE ANGRIAN WELCOME

WELCOME, heroes, to the War !
Welcome to your glory !
Will you seize your swords and dare
To be renowned in story ?
What though fame be distant far,
Flashing through the upper air,
Though the path which leads you there
Be long and rough and gory ?
Still, that path is straight and wide
Opened to receive the tide,
Youth's first flush and manhood's pride,
Age all old and hoary.
Sire and son may enter in ;
Son and sire alike may win ;
Rouse ye then and all begin
To seek the glory o'er ye !

Angrians ! when your morning rose
Before your monarch's eye,
He swore that ere its evening close
All your foes should die !
He saw the brightest star of fame
Was flashing forth on high ;
He knew that Angria's very name
Should force those foes to fly !
And down from heaven Zamorna came
To guide you to the sky :
He shook his sword of quenchless flame
And shouted, ' Victory ! '

Angrians ! if your noble King
Rides foremost to the fight,
Up ! up ! in glorious gathering
Around that helmet bright !

POEMS BY

Angrians ! if you wield your sword,
Every stroke shall be
Fixed as one undying word
In your history !

Angrians ! if in fight you die,
The clouds which o'er you rise
Shall waft your spirit to the sky
Of everlasting joys.

Angrians ! when the fight is o'er,
Heaven and earth and sea
Shall echo in the cannons' roar
Your shouts of ' Victory ! '

And now if all your bosoms beat
To reach your native star,
Shake the shackles from your feet :
Welcome to the War !

See, there the herd of Quashia
Along the Etrei lies ;
Then around the flag of Angria
Arise ! arise ! arise !

Circa 1834.

The MS. of this poem is unsigned and undated. Evidence as to authorship may be found in an unpublished story entitled ' My Angria and the Angrians,' which contains a poem signed by Charlotte Brontë (lxxi. pp. 189-91) which is introduced with the note : ' The following song is the production of that same unknown to whom we owe . . . " Welcome, heroes ! " '

LXX *

THE GRAVE OF PERCY

Alexander Percy, Earl of Northangerland, was the Prime Minister of Angria at the time of his death, which is supposed to have taken place in the year 1835. His grave was visited by his widow in fulfilment of a promise made twelve months before

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

he died : ‘ September 30th, 1834. Spent the evening at Ellington House. Zenobia, Percy, and I had a singular conversation concerning death and its sequents. We—Zenobia and myself—promised, in case Northangerland died before us, to visit the vault and unclothe the coffin where he lay twenty years subsequent to his dissolution.’

THE crypt, the nave, the chancel passed,
His burial aisle is gained at last :
His burial aisle ? Oh ! what a moan
Comes mingled with that simple tone.
No proud roofs rise for Percy now ;
For him no gleaming arches bow :
The bright saloon, the columned hall,
Are changed for shroud, and vault, and pall.
The Palace, lit with sunshine clear,
Has passed for rayless grave and bier ;
The hearth of his Patrician-home,
The concave of his glorious dome,
Have long forgot his voice, his tread ;
They, like himself, lie stilled and dead ;—
 Pass on, the hush is mournful !
And the air is faint and dim,
 And we know that earth is tombed in sleep,
 And we feel that midnight’s shadows deep
Brood round us brown and grim.
 Yet, fear not, lady, fear not,
Why dost thou tremble so ?
 I hear the beatings of thy heart,
 I see thee at each movement start,
However faint and low.
 There is nothing here to harm thee :
The dead are stilled for aye,
 And many a year has glided by
 In calm and storm, since living eye
Shed on that bier its ray.
Let’s stand awhile : all is most still ;
Save when the vault dews, dank and chill,

POEMS BY

Settled in drops on arch and wall,
Down-trickling to the pavement fall ;
And save when some strange, transient sound
Just echoes far and faintly round ;
Then dies away as it was born :
Vague, nameless, drearily forlorn.
The creaking of a coffin-lid,
A trestle 'neath its burden slid,
A louder blast of the night-wind swelling,
The distant clock from its tower knelling,
Though feeble sounds, yet shrill and deep
They fall in these lone cells of sleep
Where, void of motion, vision, breath,
Our fathers lie at rest in death.

And is this Percy's dwelling-place ?
Is *this* the goal of his proud race ?
After the mighty path he trode,
Is *this* his fixed and last abode ?
Great spirit ! hast thou slumbered here
While round and onward rolled our sphere
Still measuring out the marks of time
With 'customed change of light and clime ?
Hast thou lain stirless in this cell
While Kings and Empires rose and fell,
And War's shrill trumpet-blast has rung
So many startled lands among ?
While anguished wail, and heart-rung moan
Have followed that arousing tone
From those its parting echoes left
Of all they loved for e'er bereft.
Sometimes that noble storm of sound
Burst almost o'er the hallowed ground
Where, Percy ! thy cold ashes lie
Beneath their marble canopy ;
Where, journeying from their far-off home,
The wandering feet of pilgrims come,

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

And, worshipping, their forms they bow
To greet thy urn with lip or brow.
Sometimes it murmured far away,
As distant thunder-peals decay ;—
Land unto land in answer spoke ;
Defiance sounded, war awoke.
The very billows of the sea
Took up that awful harmony ;
The roar of thine own element
Was with its chords of thunder blent ;
Great rivers running to the deep,
Its voice bore onward in their sweep,—

Yet thou didst not awake !
A hundred plains were strewed with dead ;
A thousand hills grew gory-red :
Morn saw them blushing when she rose,
And still they blushed at twilight's close !
The moon her rays of silver threw
To shine on drops of crimson dew !
And sleep and silence fell no more
As night looked down on wave and shore,
And battle's dogs of slaughter yelled,
Rolled her dread drums, and clarions
swelled,—

Naught could thy slumber shake !
No more thy voice the senate stilled ;
No more thy taunt the victims chilled ;
That voice was hushed, the harp unstrung,
Whence once its deep, clear accents rung ;
And the taunt, the stern denouncing word,
Forgotten, lost in death, unheard.
But years the while have ceaseless flown :
Each after each has come and gone ;—
Thy crimes, thy deeds, thy glories be
Recorded themes of history.
Thy tomb has grown a mighty shrine ;
Thy name a feared, yet worshipped, sign.

POEMS BY

The clouds that once around it lay,
Frown faintly through the mellowing ray
That, still from lapsing ages stealing,
The grandeur, not the gloom, revealing,
Has given a due solemnity
To every line that speaks of thee.
O Percy ! can I now behold
The face that pall and shroud enfold ?
Oh ! can I raise the coffin-lid
And look on what is 'neath it hid ?
Can I the awful forehead see,
That cere-cloth hides so jealously ;
And see it as at last it lay
When the sun went down on thy dying day ;
When, myself beside thy pillow bending,
Thou felt the dim shade of death descending ;
And I knew by voiceless sign and token
That the pitcher at the fount was broken ;
That the cistern-wheel had ceased its turning,
And the lamp of being quenched its burning ;
That the golden cord, just loosened, quivered,
And the silver bowl lay crushed and shivered ? ¹

Thy death it was so calm and still
That, but for the silence and frozen chill,
I should have thought a blessed sleep
Had fallen, thy pangs in rest to steep.
But, gathering shadow on shadow told
That nothing lay there save an ashen mould ;
That soul from the eye and the forehead was
gone,
And the seal of its grandeur left lingering alone ;
The streams were exhausted in life's deep well,
And gone was the mighty Infidel !

¹ Sir Thomas Browne (1605-1682) has the following passage in one of his books : ' Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern.'

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Bride of his living breast, draw near !
Bend, lady, o'er thy husband's bier :
For, ere the night-lamps further wane,
We'll look on Percy's face again !

C. BRONTË. *October 8, 1834.*

The above poem is included in an unpublished story, 'My Angria and the Angrians,' by Lord Charles Albert Florian Wellesley, which was completed by Charlotte Brontë on October 14, 1834. The poem does not form part of the story, but is part of a manuscript found on the Duke of Zamorna's study table, by the supposed author of the story, who says : ' It is an odd, wild fragment. Interpret it for me who can.'

In the same story is also the following poem written in celebration of the birth of twin sons to the King and Queen of Angria :

LXXI *

HURRAH FOR THE GEMINI !

HURRAH for the Gemini ! Blest be the Star
That shone on the stream of the Blue Calabar
When the hills of the East and the woods of the
West
Bore light for their banner and flame for their
crest,
As the wind its glad tidings exultingly blew
That, if Rome had one monarch, our Angria had
two !

Sons of an Imperial line !
Welcome to your land and home.
Not at daylight's dark decline,
Princes ! is your advent come ;
Not as the orb of nations fades,
Not as the deepening evening shades
Gather in starless gloom ;

POEMS BY

But at morning's primal flush :
 Angria's bright, uprising day,
When the hills have caught the blush
 Of the earliest, fairest ray,
And the path of the untravell'd skies
Before, in crystal clearness, lies
 A wide, a trackless way ;

When her gilded woods are bending
 To the morning's wind of might ;
When her mountain-floods, descending,
 Catch the sunbeams, dazzling bright,
And flash the sudden lustre given
Backward to the breaking heaven
 In richer rays of light.

Princes ! then to life you woke,
 Then your father clasped his own ;
Then the shout of welcome broke,
 Harp was swept, and bugle blown ;
Then the deep Atlantic rang
As its flashing waters sprang
 To thunder back that tone !

Angria's glad and bracing breeze
 With your earliest breath you drew ;
All her mightiest energies
 Round and o'er your cradle blew.
Drink then, children of a King !
Up to noble beauty spring
 In heaven's fair light and dew.

With your God-like father's form,—
 Catch his spirit, catch his might ;
Then, albeit the battle-storm
 Gather round us, black as night,

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Still its blasts we may defy,
Still our flag aloft shall fly,
Still shall Angria's burning sky
Smile its living light.
Conqueror ! Ruler ! shall she be ;
Sovereign Queen by land and sea !
Her watchword shall be ' Victory ! '
Her glory ever bright !

Hurrah for the Gemini ! Blest be the Star
That shone on the stream of the Blue Calabar
When the hills of the East and the woods of the
West
Bore light for their banner and flame for their
crest,
As the wind its glad tidings exultingly blew
That, if Rome had one monarch, our Angria had
two !

CHARLOTTE BRONTË. *October 14, 1834.*

LXXII

LAMENT for the Martyr who dies for his faith,
Who prays for his foes with his failing breath,
Who sees, as he looks to the kindling sky,
God and His Captain, the Saviour, nigh ;
Who sees the mighty recompense,
When soul is conquering flesh and sense ;
Sees heaven and all its angels bright,
At the very end of his mortal fight,
At the black close of that agony
Which sets the impatient spirit free ;
Then, as in Christ he sinks to sleep,
Weep for the Dying Martyr, weep.

POEMS BY

And the soldier, laid on the battle-plain
Alone at the close of night, alone,
The passing off of some war-like strain
Blent with his latest moan ;
His thoughts all for his father-land,
His feeble heart, his unnerved hand
Still quiveringly upraised to wield
Once more his bright sword on the field,
While wakes his fainting energy
To gain her yet one victory ;
As he lies bleeding, cold and low,
As life's red tide is ebbing slow,
Lament for fallen bravery.

For the son of wisdom, the holy sage,
Full of knowledge, and hoar with age,
Him who had walked through the times of
night,
As if on his path a secret light
Lustrous and pure and silent fell ;
To all, save himself, invisible,
A secret ray from Heaven's own shrine
Poured on that spirit half divine,
And making a single Isle of light
In the wide blank ocean of Pagan night ;
Lament for him as you see him laid
Waiting for Death on the Dungeon bed,
The sickly lamp beside him burning,
Its dim ray falling on sorrow and
gloom ;
Around him his sad disciples mourning,
As they watch for the hour of awful
doom ;
And he, by coming death unshaken,
As if that slumber would soon be o'er,
As if all freshened he should waken
And see the light of morn once more.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Ay, on the sage's, the soldier's bier
I could drop many a pitying tear,
And as the martyr sinks to sleep
I could in love, in sorrow weep.

(*Unfinished.*)

C. BRONTË. *November 28, 1834.*

Included in an unpublished manuscript entitled 'The Scrap-Book : A Mingling of Many Things,' compiled by Lord C. A. F. Wellesley, completed by Charlotte Brontë on March 17, 1835. The manuscript is in the British Museum. This Lament for martyr, soldier, and sage was printed in *The Cornhill Magazine*, August 1916, pp. 147-148, with an introductory note by Dr. G. E. MacLean from which the following paragraph is taken :

'The obvious allusion in the first twelve lines is to the proto-martyr of Christianity. The stanza upon the "son of wisdom" refers to Socrates, the protomartyr of Paganism. The lament for the soldier, "laid on the battle-plain," is set like a gem between these stanzas, and flashes out her conception of the true patriot and hero. She ranks the dying common soldier,

"His thoughts all for his fatherland,"

with St. Stephen and Socrates, a trinity of martyrs of faith, of patriotism, and of philosophy.'

LXXIII *

RETROSPECTION

WE wove a web in childhood,
A web of sunny air ;
We dug a spring in infancy
Of water pure and fair ;

We sowed in youth a mustard seed,
We cut an almond rod ;
We are now grown up to riper age :
Are they withered in the sod ?

POEMS BY

Are they blighted, failed and faded,
Are they mouldered back to clay ?
For life is darkly shaded,
And its joys fleet fast away !

December 19, 1835.

LXXIV

THE WOUNDED STAG

PASSING amid the deepest shade
Of the wood's sombre heart,
Last night I saw a wounded deer
Laid lonely and apart.

Such light as pierced the crowded boughs
(Light scattered, scant, and dim),
Passed through the fern that formed his
couch,
And centred full on him.

Pain trembled in his weary limbs,
Pain filled his patient eye ;
Pain-crushed amid the shadowy fern
His branchy crown did lie.

Where were his comrades ? where his
mate ?
All from his death-bed gone !
And he, thus struck and desolate,
Suffered and bled alone.

Did he feel what a man might feel,
Friend-left and sore distress ?
Did Pain's keen dart, and Grief's sharp
sting
Strive in his mangled breast ?

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Did longing for affection lost
 Barb every deadly dart ;
Love unrepaid, and Faith betrayed,—
 Did these torment his heart ?

No ! leave to man his proper doom !
 These are the pangs that rise
Around the bed of state and gloom,
 Where Adam's offspring dies !

Mrs. Gaskell included this poem in her *Life of Charlotte Brontë*, 1857, vol. i. pp. 97-98, where she says : ' Though the date of the following poem is a little uncertain . . . It must have been written before 1833, but how much earlier there are no means of determining.' Mrs. Gaskell does not give any reason for her statement that the poem must have been written before 1833. The original manuscript of the poem is included with several other poems in a small manuscript book entitled ' The Wounded Stag and Other Poems.' The book is signed C. Brontë, and is dated January 19, 1836.

LXXV *

JULIA'S SONG

I 'VE a free hand and a merry heart ;
 I dwell in gay Madrid ;
My hair is like a night-cloud, when
 Its veil the moon has hid.

My blood is not the high Castile :
 The Moor has breathed his flame
Through every blushing artery
 That leads the crimson stream.

And yet I am of noble birth :
 My fathers, long ago,
Were mighty lords ere Granada
 Quailed to the Christian foe.

POEMS BY

But what care I for noble birth ?
I'm young and gay and free ;
I've jet-black eyes and coal-black locks
And brow of ivorie ;

I've a quick hand and a sweet guitar
And a light foot for the dance,
And many a mystic reel I know,
And many a blythe romance.

When I see the clear blue skies of Spain
And feel her glad warm sun,
I've nought to jar the harmony
They breathe my soul upon.

I'm happy when the early light
Looks through my casement panes ;
I'm happy when the sun's farewell
The sky with amber stains ;

I'm happy when the moon uplights
The green vines' leafy veil,
And smiles as I lie wakefully
And watch her lustre pale ;

And oh ! when far beneath my bower
A wild, sweet air is played,
My soul leaps up to bless the hour
Of star and serenade.

Included in the first part of an unpublished manuscript entitled ' Passing Events,' by Charles Townshend (formerly Lord C. A. F. Wellesley), completed by Charlotte Brontë on her twentieth birthday, April 21, 1836. The second part of the same manuscript, completed on April 29, 1836, contains the following two poems :

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

LXXVI *

GIPSYING

‘ When I was a gipsy in the west . . . I had opportunities
for star-gazing, for never a roof had I to roost under in the night-
time, and as an old ditty . . . goes ’ :

LANES were sweet at summer midnight ;
Flower and moss were cool with dew ;
There was neither blast nor breeze to chill me ;
Silent shade of solemn hue
Stole o’er skies intensely blue.

I looked and thought the stars were piercing
That gazed on me like eyes of light :
So still and fixed they seemed to watch me,
Ranked in myriads high and bright,
Kindling, burning, through the night.

If the hazel waved above me,
Or the wild-rose stretched its spray
O’er the green and dewy coppice,
I have shuddered where I lay
At thoughts which never came by day.

LXXVII *

MARIA AND HENRY

THE Chapelle stood and watched the way,
Its Cross still mouldered there,
But neither priest nor penitent
Now bowed the knee in prayer.

The lamps around our Lady’s shrine
Were dimmed, were quenched for aye,
But still upon her brow divine
The moonbeams slumbering lay.

POEMS BY

That night Maria thought her fair
And pure, and meet to be
The offerer of a fervid prayer,
O God in Heaven ! to Thee.

And for her fierce and faithless love
Maria wildly prayed.
St. Mary, didst thou smile above
Thine altar's solemn shade,

As rose amid the eerie hush
All through thy lone Chapelle
Petitions breathed in agony
For one beloved too well ?

Maria, die before that shrine :
Thy lord will love thee then ;
When thou art gone, in bitterness
He 'll wish thee back again !

Amid a life of woes and fears
O Brightest ! cease to stay.
Hark ! the wailing wind in the rifted arch
Says, ' Lady, pass away ! '

The lake the Chapelle looks upon
Is calm and still and deep ;
Maria thinks how pleasantly
She there might sink to sleep.

The Chapelle and the Holy Cross
Gaze calmly down the brae
On another shrine and crucifix,
As fair and pure as they !

It chanced upon that summer night
Dark Henry home did ride ;
For ancient fondness, fitfully,
Came o'er him for his bride.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Dark Henry sought his lady's bower,
But his lady's bower was lone ;
It was murk midnight at that shadowy hour :
Oh ! where could she be gone ?

Dark Henry hied to St. Mary's lake,
He hied to Madonna's shrine ;
Not a whispering word does the silence break
That reigns where those wall-flowers twine.

A ripple curls on the placid mere,
Though there is no wind to sigh ;
And a single foam-bell bubbles clear
Where the leaves of that lily lie.

Far, far under that fairy sea
Slumbers Maria placidly.

LXXVIII ¹

DIVING

Look into thought and say what dost thou see ;
Dive, be not fearful how dark the waves
flow ;
Sink through the surge, and bring pearls up
to me ;
Deeper, ay, deeper : the fairest lie low.

' I have dived, I have sought them, but none
have I found ;
In the gloom that closed o'er me no form
floated by ;
As I sank through the void depths, so black and
profound,
How dim died the sun and how far hung the
sky !

¹ This poem, and poems xcii., xciv., xcv., and xcvi., are from transcripts of ' five poems by Charlotte Brontë ' in the handwriting of her husband, the Rev. A. B. Nicholls.

POEMS BY

‘ What had I given to hear the soft sweep
Of a breeze bearing life through that vast realm
of death !

Thoughts were untroubled and dreams were
asleep :

The spirit lay dreadless and hopeless beneath.’

1836.

LXXIX *

THE PILGRIMAGE

WHY should we ever mourn as those
Whose ‘ star of hope ’ has ceased to smile ?
How dark soe’er succeeding woes,
Be still and wait and trust the while.

A time will come when future years
Their veil of softening haze shall fling
Over that mournful vale of tears
Which saw thy weary wandering.

Wild, rough, and desolate the way
To every pilgrim here below ;
All rough the path, all dim and grey
The lonely wastes through which we go.

But think of Beulah’s bowers, the home
That waits thee when this path is trod,
Lying all free from clouds and gloom,
Celestial in the smile of God.

One stream to cross, one sable flood,
Silent, unsounded, deep and dim :
It blights the flesh, it chills the blood ;
But, deathless spirit ! trust in Him ;

For on the shore of Heaven, that lies
So sweet, so fair, so bathed in light,
Angels are waiting ; lift thine eyes,
Behold them where they walk in white !

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

A little while, an hour of pain,
One struggle more, one gasp for breath,
And it is over ; ne'er again
Shall sin or sorrow, hell or death,

Prevail o'er him ; he passed away
A shade, a flower, a cloud from earth ;
On glory look, forget decay,
And know in Heaven an angel's birth.

This poem was found at the end of an untitled manuscript
completed by Charlotte Brontë on June 29, 1837.

LXXX

WATCHING AND WISHING

OH, would I were the golden light
That shines around thee now,
As slumber shades the spotless white
Of that unclouded brow !
It watches through each changeful dream
Thy features' varied play ;
It meets thy waking eyes' soft gleam
By dawn—by opening day.

Oh, would I were the crimson veil
Above thy couch of snow,
To dye that cheek so soft, so pale,
With my reflected glow !
Oh, would I were the cord of gold
Whose tassel set with pearls
Just meets the silken covering's fold,
And rests upon thy curls.

Dishevelled in thy rosy sleep,
And shading soft thy dreams ;
Across their bright and raven sweep
The golden tassel gleams !

POEMS BY

I would be anything for thee,
My love—my radiant love—
A flower, a bird, for sympathy,
A watchful star above.

This poem was first published by Thackeray in *The Cornhill Magazine*, December 1860. It has no title in the author's MS., where it appears as a serenade chanted by a young man who is 'exalted to the seventh heaven by the united influence of wine and love.' His advances are not reciprocated, and he is rather severely chastised for his foolishness. In the same MS. (which purports to be a record of events in Angria four or five years previous to the date of writing) appear also the two following poems: 'Regret' and 'Marian.' The MS. was completed by Charlotte Brontë on July 21, 1837.

LXXI

REGRET

LONG ago I wished to leave
'The house where I was born';
Long ago I used to grieve,—
My home seemed so forlorn.

In other years, its silent wood
Was full of gloom to me:
Saw I *now* its shadow brood,
How happy should I be!

Life and marriage I have known:
Things that seemed so bright;
But now utterly has flown
Every ray of light.

When my childhood's hopes were fled,
Brighter hopes arose;
Now the last is vanishèd:
It set in clouds of woes.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

'Mid the unknown sea of life
I no blest isle have found ;
At last, through all its wild waves' strife,
My bark is homeward bound.

Farewell, dark and rolling deep !
Farewell, foreign shore !
Open, in unclouded sweep,
Thou glorious realm before !

But though I had over-gone
That weary, vexèd main,
Through its tempest speaks a tone
Could call me back again.

Though clearly sung the heavenly airs
In Paradise for me,
From the softest smile it wears
I 'd turn, invoked by thee !

Storm nor surge should e'er arrest
My soul, exulting then ;
All my heaven was once thy breast :
Would it were mine again !

This poem was afterwards altered by Charlotte Brontë and published under the title of 'Regret' in *Poems by Currer, Ellis, and Acton Bell*, 1846, p. 94. In the MS. dated July 21, 1837, it appears as a song which Marian, the neglected wife of the Duke of Zamorna, was heard singing shortly before she died. For the poem as published by 'Currer Bell,' see pp. 44-45.

LXXXII *

MARIAN

BUT a recollection now,
But a dream is she ;
Not of earth the rays that glow
Round her memory.

POEMS BY

'Tis not now her youthful face,
Nor her soft blue eye,
Wakes again the fading trace
Of fondness ere it die.

Those are dim, and those are cold,
Sealed and mute and hid ;
Open not the grave-sheet's fold,
Nor lift the coffin-lid.

If you wish to think again
Of her who loved and died,
Oh ! look upward to the plain
Of heaven expanding wide.

When all calm the early moon
Looks over tower or stream,
And the unclouded heaven has grown
O'erwhelming in its beam ;

Then though thou an exile be,
Though far from hope and home,
Oh ! seek her angel memory
In that deep solemn dome.

Not hers alone, for mingled dreams
Will come if thou but gaze
Along dim hills and wandering streams
To that pure source of rays.

I have stood thus when not a sound
Arose and none was by ;
And in the impending heaven I found
A whole world's mystery.

Many like her depart, but still
That glorious moon will rise,
And in her radiant rising fill
With hope divine the skies ;

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

And every tree at such an hour,
And every bud and leaf,
So sweetly silvered, take the power
To staunch the wounds of grief ;

And each blue mount that sleeps in gold
Is but a step to heaven,
Whose glorious realms seem nearer rolled
To meet the summer even.

But now farewell to all awhile,
A lingering fond adieu
To happy dreams, to midnight's smile,
To skies of cloudless blue !
Farewell ! farewell ! a pleasant isle
Cresting life's sea with sunlit pile,
I leave bright thoughts in you.

C. BRONTË. *July 21, 1837.*

LXXXIII *

A FAREWELL

HOLY St. Cyprian ! thy waters stray
With still and solemn tone ;
And fast my bright hours pass away,
And somewhat throws a shadow grey,
Even as twilight closes day,
Upon thy waters lone.

Farewell ! if I might come again,
Young as I was and free,
And feel once more in every vein
The fire of that first passion reign,
Which sorrow could not quench nor pain,
I 'd soon return to thee ;
But, while thy billows seek the main,
That nevermore may be !

Included in manuscript without title, completed by Charlotte Brontë on January 17, 1838.

POEMS BY

LXXXIV

A VALENTINE

A ROLAND for your Oliver
We think you 've justly earned ;
You sent us such a valentine,
Your gift is now returned.

We cannot write or talk like you ;
We 're plain folks every one ;
You 've played a clever jest on us,
We thank you for the fun.

Believe us when we frankly say
(Our words, though blunt, are true),
At home, abroad, by night or day,
We all wish well to you.

And never may a cloud come o'er
The sunshine of your mind ;
Kind friends, warm hearts, and happy hours
Through life, we trust, you 'll find.

Where'er you go, however far
In future years you stray,
There shall not want our earnest prayer
To speed you on your way.

A stranger and a pilgrim here
We know you sojourn now ;
But brighter hopes, with brighter wreaths,
Are doomed to bind your brow.

Not always in these lonely hills
Your humble lot shall lie ;
The oracle of fate foretells
A worthier destiny.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

And though her words are veiled in gloom,
Though clouded her decree,
Yet doubt not that a juster doom
She keeps in store for thee.

Then cast hope's anchor near the shore,
'Twill hold your vessel fast,
And fear not for the tide's deep roar,
And dread not for the blast.

For though this station now seems near,
'Mid land-locked creeks to be,
The helmsman soon his ship will steer
Out to the wide blue sea.

Well officered and staunchly manned,
Well built to meet the blast ;
With favouring winds the bark must land
On glorious shores at last.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË. *February 1840.*

This 'valentine' is supposed to have been sent to the Rev. William Weightman, M.A., at that time curate of Haworth, who had sent a valentine to each of the Brontë sisters. In a letter written to her friend, Ellen Nussey, a year later, Charlotte Brontë says : ' I dare say you have received a valentine this year from our bonny-faced friend the curate of Haworth. I got a precious specimen a few days before I left home, but I know better how to treat it than I did those we received a year ago.'

LXXXV *

NAPOLEON

Translated from the French of Henri Auguste Barbier.

O CORSICAN ! thou of the stern contour !
Thy France, how fair was she
When the broad ardent sun of Messidor ¹
At length beheld her free !

¹ The tenth month of the calendar of the first French Republic, from June 19 to July 18.

POEMS BY

Like a young horse unbroke to servitude,
Bridle she scorned and rein :
Still on her hot flanks smoked the recent blood
Of kings on scaffolds slain.

Proudly her free hoof struck the ancient soil ;
Insult by word or deed
She knew not : never hand of outrage vile
Had pressed on that wild steed ;
Never had her deep flanks the saddle borne
Or harness of the foe :
All virgin she, her heavy mane unshorn
Wantoned in vagrant flow.

The eye of fire, set in her slender head,
Shot forth a tameless ray ;
Reared up erect, the whole world she dismayed
With her shrill savage neigh.
Napoleon came : he marked her noble strain,
Her blood, her mettle bold :
Grasping the thick locks of her gipsy mane
His hand took steadfast hold.

.¹

O'er flesh, like clay, galloped the goaded horse,
Breast deep in blood and tears ;
She trampled generations in her course
For fifteen bloody years.
For fifteen years of carnage, woe, and wrath,
O'er prostrate lands she rode,
And still she wore not out the endless path
Her hoof of iron trode.

Weary at last of ever onward hasting,
Finding no resting place,
Weary of grinding earth, of wildly wasting,
Like dust, the human race ;

¹ The fourth stanza is omitted : it has been left in an unfinished state in the MS.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

With limbs unnerved, staggering at every pace,
Weak as if death were near,
She prayed the Corsican a moment's grace :
Tyrant ! he would not hear.

Closer he pressed her with his vigorous thigh ;
In rage, her teeth he broke,
Hard drew the bit, stifled the piercing cry
That quickened torture woke.
Once more she rose ; at length, one battle-day,
Prone to the field she fell :
Unhorsed, unhelmed, her haughty rider lay
Crushed, on a heap of shell !

March 1843.

LXXXVI

ON THE DEATH OF EMILY JANE BRONTË

My darling, thou wilt never know
The grinding agony of woe
That we have borne for thee.
Thus may we consolation tear
E'en from the depth of our despair
And wasting misery.

The nightly anguish thou art spared
When all the crushing truth is bared
To the awakening mind,
When the galled heart is pierced with grief,
Till wildly it implores relief,
But small relief can find.

Nor know'st thou what it is to lie
Looking forth with streaming eye
On life's lone wilderness.
' Weary, weary, dark and drear,
How shall I the journey bear,
The burden and distress ? '

POEMS BY

Then since thou art spared such pain
We will not wish thee here again ;
He that lives must mourn.
God help us through our misery
And give us rest and joy with thee
When we reach our bourne !

December 24, 1848.

Emily Jane Brontë died on December 19, 1848.

LXXXVII

ON THE DEATH OF ANNE BRONTË

THERE 's little joy in life for me,
And little terror in the grave ;
I 've lived the parting hour to see
Of one I would have died to save.

Calmly to watch the failing breath,
Wishing each sigh might be the last ;
Longing to see the shade of death
O'er those belovèd features cast.

The cloud, the stillness that must part
The darling of my life from me ;
And then to thank God from my heart,
To thank Him well and fervently ;

Although I knew that we had lost
The hope and glory of our life ;
And now, benighted, tempest-tossed,
Must bear alone the weary strife.

June 21, 1849.

Anne Brontë died at Scarborough on May 28, 1849, four days after leaving home with her only remaining sister. Charlotte Brontë returned home to Haworth Parsonage on June 21,

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

1849, the day on which the poem appears to have been written.

Facsimiles of the manuscripts containing the two preceding poems were printed in *The Woman at Home*, December 1896; and in *A Bibliography of the Writings in Prose and Verse of the Members of the Brontë Family*, 1917, p. 199, by Thomas J. Wise.

2

UNDATED POEMS

LXXXVIII

MASTER AND PUPIL

I GAVE, at first, attention close ;
Then interest warm ensued ;
From interest, as improvement rose,
Succeeded gratitude.

Obedience was no effort soon,
And labour was no pain ;
If tired, a word, a glance alone
Would give me strength again.

From others of the studious band
Ere long he singled me ;
But only by more close demand
And sterner urgency.

The task he from another took,
From me he did reject ;
He would no slight omission brook,
And suffer no defect.

If my companions went astray,
He scarce their wanderings blamed ;
If I but faltered in the way,
His anger fiercely flamed.

POEMS BY

When sickness stayed awhile my course,
He seemed impatient still,
Because his pupil's flagging force
Could not obey his will.

One day when summoned to the bed
Where pain and I did strive,
I heard him, as he bent his head,
Say, ' God, she must revive ! '

I felt his hand, with gentle stress,
A moment laid on mine,
And wished to mark my consciousness
By some responsive sign.

But powerless then to speak or move,
I only felt, within,
The sense of Hope, the strength of Love,
Their healing work begin.

And as he from the room withdrew,
My heart his steps pursued ;
I longed to prove, by efforts new,
My speechless gratitude.

When once again I took my place,
Long vacant, in the class,
Th' unfrequent smile across his face
Did for one moment pass.

The lessons done ; the signal made
Of glad release and play,
He, as he passed, an instant stayed,
One kindly word to say.

' Jane, till to-morrow you are free
From tedious task and rule ;
This afternoon I must not see
That yet pale face in school.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

‘ Seek in the garden-shades a seat,
Far from the playground din ;
The sun is warm, the air is sweet :
Stay till I call you in.’

A long and pleasant afternoon
I passed in those green bowers ;
All silent, tranquil, and alone
With birds, and bees, and flowers.

Yet, when my master’s voice I heard
Call, from the window, ‘ Jane ! ’
I entered, joyful, at the word,
The busy house again.

He, in the hall, paced up and down ;
He paused as I passed by ;
His forehead stern relaxed its frown ;
He raised his deep-set eye.

‘ Not quite so pale,’ he murmured low.
‘ Now, Jane, go rest awhile.’
And as I smiled his smoothened brow
Returned as glad a smile.

My perfect health restored, he took
His mien austere again ;
And, as before, he would not brook
The slightest fault from Jane.

The longest task, the hardest theme
Fell to my share as erst,
And still I toiled to place my name
In every study first.

He yet begrudged and stinted praise,
But I had learnt to read
The secret meaning of his face,
And that was my best meed.

POEMS BY

Even when his hasty temper spoke
In tones that sorrow stirred,
My grief was lulled as soon as woke
By some relenting word.

And when he lent some precious book,
Or gave some fragrant flower,
I did not quail to Envy's look,
Upheld by Pleasure's power.

At last our school ranks took their ground,
The hard-fought field I won ;
The prize, a laurel-wreath, was bound
My throbbing forehead on.

Low at my master's knee I bent,
The offered crown to meet ;
Its green leaves through my temples sent
A thrill as wild as sweet.

The strong pulse of Ambition struck
In every vein I owned ;
At the same instant, bleeding broke
A secret, inward wound.

The hour of triumph was to me
The hour of sorrow sore ;
A day hence I must cross the sea,
Ne'er to recross it more.

An hour hence, in my master's room,
I with him sat alone,
And told him what a dreary gloom
O'er joy had parting thrown.

He little said ; the time was brief,
The ship was soon to sail ;
And while I sobbed in bitter grief
My master but looked pale.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

They called in haste : he bade me go,
Then snatched me back again ;
He held me fast and murmured low,
‘ Why will they part us, Jane ?

‘ Were you not happy in my care ?
Did I not faithful prove ?
Will others to my darling bear
As true, as deep a love ?

‘ O God, watch o’er my foster-child !
Oh, guard her gentle head !
When winds are high and tempests wild
Protection round her spread !

‘ They call again : leave then my breast ;
Quit thy true shelter, Jane ;
But when deceived, repulsed, opprest,
Come home to me again ! ’

The original draft of the above poem is in an exercise-book used by Charlotte Brontë in Brussels, 1843. It contains two rejected stanzas, the tenth and eleventh, as follows :

It was a genial summer day,
The sun the lattice lit ;
Bees humming in the ardent ray
O’er garden beds did flit.

A gentle breeze, as fresh as sweet,
In through the window blew ;
I, weary of the schoolroom heat,
Aside the curtain drew.

The remainder of the MS. differs from the printed version in only two words : ‘ returning ’ for ‘ responsive ’ in the eighth stanza ; and ‘ trees ’ for ‘ bees ’ in the fifteenth stanza.

POEMS BY

LXXXIX

WHEN THOU SLEEPEST

WHEN thou sleepest, lulled in night,
Art thou lost in vacancy ?
Does no silent inward light,
Softly breaking, fall on thee ?
Does no dream on quiet wing
Float a moment 'mid that ray,
Touch some answering mental string,
Wake a note and pass away ?

When thou watchest, as the hours
Mute and blind are speeding on,
O'er that rayless path, where lowers
Muffled midnight, black and lone ;
Comes there nothing hovering near,
Thought or half reality,
Whispering marvels in thine ear,
Every word a mystery.

Chanting low an ancient lay,
Every plaintive note a spell,
Clearing memory's clouds away,
Showing scenes thy heart loves well ?
Songs forgot, in childhood sung,
Airs in youth beloved and known,
Whispered by that airy tongue,
Once again are made thine own.

Be it dream in haunted sleep,
Be it thought in vigil lone,
Drink'st thou not a rapture deep
From the feeling, 'tis thine own ?
All thine own ; thou need'st not tell
What bright form thy slumber blest ;—
All thine own ; remember well
Night and shade were round thy rest.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Nothing looked upon thy bed,
Save the lonely watch-light's gleam ;
Not a whisper, not a tread
Scared thy spirit's glorious dream ;
Sometimes, when the midnight gale
Breathed a moan and then was still,
Seemed the spell of thought to fail,
Checked by one ecstatic thrill ;

Felt as all external things,
Robed in moonlight, smote thine eye ;
Then thy spirit's waiting wings
Quivered, trembled, spread to fly ;
Then the aspirer wildly swelling
Looked, where 'mid transcendence
Star to star was mutely telling
Heaven's resolve and fate's decree.

Oh ! it longed for holier fire
Than this spark in earthly shrine ;
Oh ! it soared, and higher, higher,
Sought to reach a home divine.
Hopeless quest ! soon weak and weary
Flagged the pinion, drooped the plume,
And again in sadness dreary
Came the baffled wanderer home.

And again it turned for soothing
To the unfinished, broken dream ;
While, the ruffled current smoothing,
Thought rolled on her startled stream.
I have felt this cherished feeling,
Sweet and known to none but me ;
Still I felt it nightly healing
Each dark day's despondency.

POEMS BY

XC

GODS of the old mythology, arise in gloom and storm ;

Adramalec,¹ bow down thy head ; Nergal,² dark fiend, thy form ;—

The giant sons of Anakim bowed lowest at thy shrine,

And thy temple rose in Argob, with its hallowed groves of vine ;

And there was eastern incense burnt, and there were garments spread,

With the fine gold decked and broidered, and tinged with radiant red,—

With the radiant red of furnace-flames that through the shadow shone,

As the full moon when on Sinai's top her rising light is thrown.

Baal of Chaldæa, dread god of the sun,

Come from the towers of thy proud Babylon,

From the groves where the green-palms of Media grow,

Where flowers of Assyria all fragrantly blow ;

Where the waves of Euphrates glide deep as the sea,
Washing the gnarled roots of Lebanon's tree.

Ashtaroath, curse of the Ammonites,³ rise

Decked with the beauty and light of the skies ;—

Let stars be thy crown, and let mists round thee curl

Light as the gossamer, pure as the pearl.

Semele, soft vision, come glowing and brightly,

Come in a shell like the Greek Aphrodite,

¹ ? Adrammélech, a god of Sepharvaim.

² The Assyrian god of warfare.

³ Probably a mistake for ' Sidonians ' (2 Kings 23 : 13).

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Come in the billowy rush of the foam
From thy gold house in Elysium, roam
Where the bright purple blooms of glory
Picture forth thy goddess-story.

.

The last four stanzas are now printed for the first time in Great Britain. An incorrect transcript of the whole poem was printed in New York in the year 1902, in an edition limited to one hundred and ten copies for private circulation only.

XCI

REASON

UNLOVED I love, unwept I weep,
Grief I restrain, hope I repress ;
Vain is this anguish, fixed and deep,
Vainer desires or means ¹ of bliss.

My life is cold, love's fire being dead ;
That fire self-kindled, self-consumed ;
What living warmth erewhile it shed,
Now to how drear extinction doomed !

Devoid of charm how could I dream
My unasked love would e'er return ?
What fate, what influence lit the flame
I still feel inly, deeply burn ?

Alas ! there are those who should not love ;
I to this dreary band belong ;
This knowing let me henceforth prove
Too wise to list delusion's song.

No, Syren ! Beauty is not mine ;
Affection's joy I ne'er shall know ;
Lonely will be my life's decline,
Even as my youth is lonely now.

¹ ? dreams.

POEMS BY

Come Reason—Science—Learning—Thought—
To you my heart I dedicate ;
I have a faithful subject brought :
Faithful because most desolate.

Fear not a wandering, feeble mind :
Stern Sovereign, it is all your own
To crush, to cheer, to loose, to bind ;
Unclaimed, unshared, it seeks your throne.

Soft may the breeze of summer blow,
Sweetly its sun in valleys shine ;
All earth around with love may glow,—
No warmth shall reach this heart of mine.

Vain boast and false ! Even now the fire
Though smothered, slacked, repelled, is burning
At my life's source ; and stronger, higher,
Waxes the spirit's trampled yearning.

It wakes but to be crushed again :
Faint I will not, nor yield to sorrow ;
Conflict and force will quell the brain ;
Doubt not I shall be strong to-morrow.

Have I not fled that I may conquer ?
Crost the dark sea in firmest faith
That I at last might plant my anchor
Where love cannot prevail to death ?

XCII

HE saw my heart's woe, discovered my soul's
anguish,
How in fever, in thirst, in atrophy it pined ;
Knew he could heal, yet looked and let it
languish,—
To its moans spirit-deaf, to its pangs spirit-blind.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

But once a year he heard a whisper low and dreary
Appealing for aid, entreating some reply ;
Only when sick, soul-worn, and torture-weary,
Breathed I that prayer, heaved I that sigh.

He was mute as is the grave, he stood stirless as
a tower ;

At last I looked up, and saw I prayed to stone :
I asked help of that which to help had no power,
I sought love where love was utterly unknown.

Idolater I kneeled to an idol cut in rock !

I might have slashed my flesh and drawn my
heart's best blood :

The Granite God had felt no tenderness, no shock ;
My Baal had not seen nor heard nor under-
stood.

In dark remorse I rose ; I rose in darker shame ;
Self-condemned I withdrew to an exile from my
kind ;

A solitude I sought where mortal never came,
Hoping in its wilds forgetfulness to find.

Now, Heaven, heal the wound which I still deeply
feel ;

Thy glorious hosts look not in scorn on our
poor race ;

Thy King eternal doth no iron judgment deal
On suffering worms who seek forgiveness,
comfort, grace.

He gave our hearts to love : He will not love
despise,

E'en if the gift be lost, as mine was long ago ;
He will forgive the fault, will bid the offender rise,
Wash out with dews of bliss the fiery brand of
woe ;

POEMS BY

And give a sheltered place beneath the unsullied
throne,
Whence the soul redeemed may mark Time's
fleeting course round earth ;
And know its trials overpast, its sufferings gone,
And feel the peril past of Death's immortal
birth.

XCIII

EVENTIDE

THE house was still, the room was still,
'Twas eventide in June ;
A caged canary to the sun
Then setting, trilled a tune.

A free bird on the lilac-bush
Outside the lattice heard ;
He listened long—there came a hush,
He dropped an answering word.

XCIV

It is not at an hour like this
We would remember those we love,
As the far hills commingling kiss
That grey and sunless heaven above,
All dim and chill, a time of tears
And dying hopes and gathering fears.

But I am lone, and so art thou,
And leagues of land between us lie ;
And though we moaned expiring now,
One could not watch the other die ;
And till corruption's work was done,
Neither could gaze his idol on.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

And well I know this cloudy close,
Sealing a long, dark day of gloom,
Will bring o'er that soft brow's repose
A token of untimely doom ;
And it will droop in heart-felt pain,
As though it ne'er might rise again.

All pale that cheek ; no fervent glow
Of longing, watching, waiting love,—
No swell of that white breast to show
How pants in hope my suffering dove ;
But one hand on the other laid,
She sits and weeps in twilight's shade.

xcv *

DREAM of the West ! the moor was wild ;
Its glens the blue Guardina ploughed ;
An August sunset, rich and mild,
Over the heath in amber glowed.

Dream of the West ! two thousand miles
Between me and the Gambia spread.
Land of the sun ! transcendent smiles
Like thine, his orb departing shed.

Birthplace of gods ! thy forests proud
Hung in the air their sea-green piles.
Eden of earth ! the sunset cloud
Portrayed thee in its golden isles.

Now what shall tell the scene and sound
I wrought from eve's voluptuous gale,
Singing of bright and hallowed ground
Where wild wood moans from wilder vale ?

Linked with the name of every land
Some thought will rise, some scene unfold,—
The bending wood, the barren sand,
The lake, the Nile, the dreary wold.

POEMS BY

Speak of the North ! A lonely moor
Silent and dark and trackless swells ;
The waves of some wild streamlet pour
Hurriedly through its ferny dells.

Profoundly still the twilight air,
Lifeless the landscape ; so we deem,
Till like a phantom gliding near
A stag bends down to drink the stream.

And far away a mountain zone,
A cold white waste of snow-drifts lies,
And one star, large and soft and lone,
Silently lights the unclouded skies.

Speak of the South ! A sun-bright sea
Washes a land of vines and flowers,
Where lowly huts lie pleasantly
In the green arms of guardian bowers.

XCVI *

HE could not sleep !—the couch of war,
Simple and rough beneath him spread,
Scared sleep away, and scattered far
The balm its influence might have shed.

He could not sleep ! his temples, pressed
To the hard pillow, throbbed with pain ;
The belt around his noble breast
His heart's wild pulse could scarce restrain.

And stretched in feverish unrest
Awake the great commander lay ;
In vain the cooling night-wind kissed
His brow with its reviving play,

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

As through the open window streaming
All the fresh scents of night it shed,
And mingled with the moonlight, beaming
In broad clear lustre round his bed.

Out in the night Cirhala's water
Lifted its voice of swollen floods ;
On its wild shores the bands of slaughter
Lay camped amid its savage woods.

Beneath the lonely Auberge's shelter
The Duke's rough couch that night was spread ;
The sods of battle round him welter
In noble blood that morning shed ;

And, gorged with prey, and now declining
From all the fire of glory won,
Watchful and fierce he lies repining
O'er what may never be undone.

XCVII *

Fragment of a poem in pencil inside the cover of Charlotte Brontë's French Grammar (*Grammatical Exercises in English and French*, by Mr. Porny, London, 1810) in her handwriting.

ON the bright scenes around them spread,
Lit tenderly with those mild rays,
The last the dying sun had shed ;

The park with its broad slopes of green,
Where now the mighty shadows lay,
Of tower and turret, kindling sheen
With amber-light on stone-work grey ;
For the Ducal Castle, like a screen,
Stood against the farewell's level ray

POEMS BY

Shot still from that refulgent West
O'er Lismore's tower and Gambia's wood,
Kindling the Elver's azure breast
Till it ran like a red stream of blood.

All this was fair, but not to me,
And, oh ! my heart sank heavily
When, from the casement, arched and tall,
That dimly lit that Norman Hall,
I looked far down . . .

.
I can speak no more, as, in fancy,
I am farther out on this sullen sea ;
Darker waves of its waters come,
Driving me faster from peace and home.
Never a beacon burns on the deep ;
The fires are out, and the watchers asleep ;
And the wild race of the swelling main,
The foam-wreaths bursting and foaming again,
The scream of the sea-birds, the deep-toned blast,
The billows that roll ceaseless past,
Ay, the thoughts of an evil heart,
The croak of a conscience not yet cured,
The visions that will not depart,
Are worse than all that man has endured
On the most troubled sea that ever
Made the strongest vessel quiver.

These stanzas are dated January 17, 183— (?), the last figure being undecipherable.

XCVIII *

A FRAGMENT

Overcome with that delightful sensation of lassitude which the perfect repose of nature in the stillness of such an evening occasions, I dropped the oars, and, falling listlessly back, allowed my light-winged pinnace to float as chance might lead. For

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

about an hour I lay thus, gazing on the calm water and unclouded sky above me, from which breathed a sweet balminess that scarcely fanned my temples. At length my boat lay perfectly motionless, and I raised myself and found that, as if soul-taught, it had wafted itself into a little willow-fringed fairy bay. Disembarking, I fastened it to a decayed larch, and, following a pleasant path embroidered with moss and wild flowers, I presently entered the twilight shadow of a wood. Ere I emerged from the darkness of its impending boughs the moon and Hesperus had set their watch in Heaven. The soft light which fell from them, and was reflected from the calm fading glories of the west, showed me that I was now in a wild, winding glen embosomed in lofty precipitous falls barren of all ornament save the purple heath flower. A chill wind now rose, and as it sighed around or murmured mournfully in the heart of the forest, a sudden burst of sweet sad music mingled with its wailing. I looked up, and saw by the clear moonlight a figure clad in white sitting on an overhanging cliff, and bending over a harp with whose tones this sorrowful strain was blent :—

Lo ! stretched beneath the clustering
 palm
The stately noble lies ;
Around him dwells a holy calm
 Breathed softly from the skies.

The zephyrs fan with sweet caress
 Recumbent majesty,
And loud winds of the wilderness
 All silently pass by.

The lion from his desert lair
 Comes forth to fierce foray,
His red eyes fired by hunger glare
 In eager search for prey.

He spies him in his dreamless sleep
 All on the moonlit ground,
And away as with a whirlwind sweep
 Behold the monster bound.

POEMS BY

For holy, holy is thy rest
Though in the desert laid :
A spirit's spell is o'er thee cast
Amid that palmy shade.

Oh, clouds come o'er that vision bright,
And soft it fades away,
The witchery of memory's might
Inviting still its stay.

But vainly ; where my warrior slept
The cold sad moonbeams lie ;
And where Sabean odours wept
The winds of midnight sigh.

But while bewildered ocean spreads
Afar her thundering plain ;
And while the light of Heaven sheds
Still splendour on the main ;

I 'll ne'er forget that stately form,
That eye's entrancing light,
Whence oft the wildest passion's storm
Flashed forth in sudden might ;

Or in whose dark orbs lustre lay
Borne from the worlds of thought ;
But brightest shone that wondrous ray
From holy regions brought ;

Where spirits of the favoured few
Alone may ever dwell ;
Where clearer than Parnassian dew
A hundred fountains well ;

The fountains sweet of poesy,
That nectar of the sky,
Where wreaths of immortality
In hallowed beauty lie.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

But, lo ! Diana's silver bow
Hath quitted human ken ;
And the chill night-winds coldly blow
Adown this lonely glen.

Oh, happy may his slumber be
This night, in lands afar,
Beneath the desert plantain-tree,
Beneath the silver star ;

Or in his gorgeous Indian home
On slave-surrounded bed,
All underneath some solemn dome
Whence lamps their glories shed.

His dreams are of some other world,
His mighty soul is free ;
His spirit's pinions all unfurled
Rise high in radiancy.

The MS. of this ' Fragment ' is unsigned and undated. There are four pages measuring $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches by $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches in microscopic writing, and the contents are attributed to ' Brontë (Emily ?) ' in an Auction Sale Catalogue dated June 19, 1914 ; but the subject, style, and writing are too much like the work of Charlotte Brontë at fourteen and fifteen years of age for there to be any doubt as to authorship.

APPENDIX

BRONTË POEMS

The original manuscripts of the poems printed in this Appendix are unsigned and undated. They have been published :

- (1) Lines 152-205 of the first poem as the work of Charlotte Brontë ; and
- (2) As four poems, or fragments of poems, by Emily Brontë.

For evidence that the poems are not the work of Emily Brontë, see ' Notes on some Brontë Manuscripts,' printed in *The Complete Poems of Emily Jane Brontë*, 1923.

The manuscripts appear to be in the handwriting of Charlotte Brontë ; but the internal evidence of the first—especially the weak character of Percy as compared with the strong and defiant Percy of Charlotte Brontë's signed stories and poems (see pp. 176 and 184)—points to Branwell Brontë having had a share in the composition. The manuscript of the fragment of a poem, ' Sleep, mourner, sleep ! ' in Branwell Brontë's handwriting, dated January 13, 1837, appears to be a continuation of the same poem, as do other fragments of poems in his handwriting.

XCIX

ZAMORNA AND PERCY

LADYBIRD ! ladybird ! fly away home,
Night is approaching, and sunset is come ;
The herons are flown to their trees by the
Hall ;
Felt, but unseen, the damp dewdrops fall.
This is the close of a still summer day ;
Ladybird ! ladybird ! haste ! fly away !

5

APPENDIX

The grand old Hall is wrapped in shade,
The woodland park around it spread
In gathering gloom in every glade.
This is the moment, this the hour, 10
To feel romance in all her power.

Is there not something in a name,
In noble blood, and ancient fame ?
Something in that ancestral pride
Which brings the memory of the dead 15
Sailing adown Time's hoary tide,
With sacred halos round it shed ?

Halos ! Oh, far too bright to shine
Round aught whose home is still below ;
The starlight thoughts, the dreams divine, 20
From man's creative soul that flow,

And stream upon the idols bright
He forms through all his earthly way,
As if grown weary of the light
That smiles upon his own dull clay,— 25

That clay he feels will not for ever
'Cumber the spirit that would soar
To that deep and swelling river
Which bears the life-tree on its shore ;
And he the hour would still foresee 30
That sets his inward angel free.

This Hall and park might wake such
dreams :

They speak of pride of ancestry ;
Yes ! every fading ray which gleams
On antique roof, and hoary tree, 35
Shows in gnarled bough and mossy slate
The grand remains of ancient state.

BRONTË POEMS

And thinks he of Patrician pride,
He who sits lonely there,
Where oaks and elms spread dark and wide 40
Their huge arms in the air ?

He wanders in the world of thought,
He 's left *this* world behind :
On that high brow are clearly wrought
A thousand dreams of mind. 45

And are they dreams of bliss or bale,
Of happiness or woe ?
Methinks that face is all too pale
For pleasure's rosy glow.

Methinks the mellowing haze of years 50
Is o'er that tall form spread,
And time has poured her smiles and tears
Full freely round that head.

He must have once been beautiful :
The relics still remain,— 55
Though wasted sore with sorrow,
And darkened much with pain.

At morn he sought this lone retreat,
When the sun first crowned the hill ;
And now the twilight calm and sweet 60
Beholds him lingering still.

Yet not to reveries of woe
Clings Percy's wounded spirit so :
Scarce bound by its worn chains of clay,
The soul has almost soared away. 65

Lightened and soothed insensibly
By the lone home of wind and tree ;
Where now his mental broodings dwell,
Vainly would man divine or tell.

APPENDIX

His upward look, his earnest eyes, 70
Seem gazing e'en beyond the skies.
Who calls him back to earth again
Will bring a wild revulse of pain.

And so thought he ¹ who glided now,
With step as light as falling snow, 75
Forth from the bowery arch of trees,
That whispered in the gloaming breeze.

That step he might have used before
When stealing on to lady's bower,
Forth at the same still twilight hour, 80
For the moon now beaming mild above
Showed him a son of war and love.

His eye was full of that sinful fire
Which oft unhallowed passions light.
It spoke of quickly kindled ire, 85
Of love too warm, and wild, and bright.

Bright, but yet sullied; love which could never
Bring good in rising, leave peace in decline;
Woe to the gifted, crime to the giver,
Wherever reposed all the light of its shine. 90

Beauty had lavished her treasures upon him,
Youth's early sunshine was poured on his
brow;
Alas! that the magic of sin should have won
him;
But he is her slave, and her chained victim
now.

Now from his curled and shining hair, 95
Circling the brow of marble fair,
His dark, keen eyes on Percy gaze
With stern, and yet repenting rays.

¹ Zamorna.

BRONTË POEMS

Sometimes they shimmer through the haze
Of sadly gushing tears, 100
And then a sudden flash of flame,
Speaking wild feelings none could tame,
The dim suffusion clears.

Young savage ! how he bends above
The object of his wrath and love ; 105
How tenderly his fingers press
The hand that shrinks from their caress ;

And from his lips, in Percy's ear,
Flow tones his blood congeals to hear.
Those tones were softer than the moan 110
Of echo, when the sound is flown ;

And sweeter than a flute's reply
To skylark's song, or wild wind's sigh.
Yet Percy heard them as they fell
Like the dull toll of a passing-bell. 115

Sternly they summoned him back again
To a dark world of woe and pain :
The blood from his visage fell away
And left it as pallid as confined clay.

Like clouds the charmèd visions broke ;— 120
From his daylong dream at once he woke ;
He woke to feel and see at his side
The very man who dared to roll
This dark, unsounded briny tide
Over the Eden of his soul ; 125

Who dared to pluck his last fair flower ;
To quench his last star's cheering beam ;
The last sweet drop of bliss to sour
That mingled with his being's stream.

APPENDIX

Up rose he, and stretched forth his hand, 130
In mingled menace and command ;
With voice subdued and steady look,
Thus to the man of sin he spoke :

‘ What brought you here ? I called you not ;
You ’ve tracked me to a lonely spot. 135
Are you a hawk to follow the prey,
When mangled it flutters feebly away ?

‘ A sleuth-hound to track the deer by his blood,
When wounded he wins to the darkest wood,
There, if he can, to die alone, 140
Unsought by the archer whose shaft has
 flown
So right and true to its living mark
That it quenches e’en now the vital spark ?

‘ Zamorna, is this nobly done,
 To triumph o’er your Consort’s sire, 145
Gladly to see his gory sun
 Quench, in a sea of tears, its fire ?

‘ But haply you have news to tell,
Tidings that yet may cheer me well ;
You ’ve crushed at last my rose’s bloom, 150
And scattered its leaves on her mother’s tomb :

‘ For its faded buds all ready lie
To deck my coffin when I die.
Bring them here—’twill not be long,
’Tis the last line of the woeful song ; 155

‘ And these final and dying words are sung
To the discord of lute-strings all unstrung.
O Adrian ! do not harshly sweep
The chords that are quivering to voiceless
 sleep.’

BRONTË POEMS

‘ No ! but I ’d string them once more to a
sound 160

That should startle the nations that rest around.
I ’d call forth the glorious chorus again
Which flooded the earth with a bloody main.

‘ Have I crushed you, Percy ? I ’d raise once
more

The beacon-light on the rocky shore. 165

Percy, my love is so true and deep,
That though kingdoms should wail and worlds
should weep

I ’d fling the brand in the hissing sea,
The brand that must burn unquenchably.

‘ Your rose is mine ; when the sweet leaves
fade, 170

They must be the chaplet to wreath my head,
The blossoms to deck my home with the dead.

‘ I repent not—that which my hand has done
Is as fixed as the orb of the burning sun ;
But I swear by Heaven and the mighty sea 175
That, wherever I wander, my heart is with thee.

‘ Bitterly, deeply, I ’ve drunk of thy woe ;
When thy stream was troubled, did mine calmly
flow ?

And yet I repent not : I ’d crush thee again
If our vessels sailed adverse on life’s stormy
main. 180

‘ But, listen ! The earth is our campaign of war,
Her children are rank, and her kingdoms spread
far.

Who shall say “ Hah ! ” to the mingling star ?
Is there not havoc and carnage for thee
Unless thou couchest thy lance at me ? 185

APPENDIX

‘ The heart in my bosom beats high at the
thought
Of the deeds which by blended strength may be
wrought.
Then might thy Mary bloom blissfully still :
This hand should ne’er work her sorrow or ill.

‘ No fear of grief in her bright eyes should
quiver : 190
I’d love her and guard her for ever and ever.
What ! shall Zamorna go down to the dead
With blood on his hand that he wept to have
shed ?

‘ What ! shall they carve on his tomb with the
sword :
“ The slayer of Percy, the scourge of the
Lord ? ” ’ 195

Bright flashed the fire in the young duke’s
eye
As he spoke in the tones of the trumpet
swelling ;
Then he stood still and watched earnestly
How these tones were on Percy’s spirit telling.

Nothing was heard but his quick short breath, 200
And his fiery heart aroused panting ;
The dark wood lay as hushed as death :
Nor hum, nor murmur its valley haunting.

Then the low voice of Percy woke,
And thus in strange response he spoke. 205

BRONTË POEMS

C

TO THE HORSE BLACK EAGLE WHICH I RODE AT THE BATTLE OF ZAMORNA

SWART steed of night ! thou hast charged thy last
O'er the red, war-trampled plain ;
Now fallen asleep is the battle-blast :
It is stilled above the slain.

Now hushed is the clang of armour bright ;
Thou wilt never bear me more
To the deadliest press of the gathering fight
Through seas of noble gore.

And the cold eyes of midnight skies
Shall not pour their light on thee,
When the wearied host of the conqueror lies
On a field of victory.

Rest now in thy glory, noble steed ;
Rest ! all thy wars are done :
True is the love and high the meed
Thou, from thy lord, hast won.

In daisied lawns sleep peacefully,
Dwell by the quiet wave
Till death shall sound his signal-cry
And call thee to thy grave.

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